Social Partnerships for Educational and Community Change

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SOCIAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR EDUCATIONAL AND COMMUNITY CHANGE

Dissertation
by

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submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

December 2018

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Abstract

The challenges facing our communities are complex, interconnected, and urgent (Kania & Kramer, 2011). Recognizing these challenges, policy makers, funders, and practitioners are turning to social partnerships as a promising strategy for community and educational change (Bess, 2015; Henig et al., 2015). Social partnerships involve the joining together of organizations from across sectors of society to tackle social problems (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014). The underlying premise of the Promise Neighborhoods program, one such social partnership, is that providing access to resources, services, and supports in a comprehensive manner will have the greatest effect on educational and community outcomes (U.S. Department of Education, 2018).

This study seeks to shed light on the process of initiating and implementing a social partnership. In this study the author employed a two-phased, mixed methods design using social network analysis and interviews with organizational representatives to examine the network structures of communication and collaboration within one Promise Neighborhoods initiative: the Boston Promise Initiative. The sample for the social network analysis consisted of 33 individuals from 27 partner organizations. Further, follow-up interviews with 11 individuals were held to understand how network structures and processes might impact educational and community change.

Findings from the social network analysis and qualitative interviews reveal networks of communication and collaboration rooted in a deep history of place-based

change efforts, facilitating access to network resources and social capital among partner organizations. The findings highlight the importance of recognizing both challenges and opportunities of partnering with schools. Further, the findings highlight the importance of a lead organization's ability to attend to both technical processes, such as facilitating communication among partners, and cultural processes, such as negotiating organizational identity. Taken together, the findings from this study point to the complex nature of cross-sector collaboration and identify structural factors and network processes that may impact the success of the efforts. By better understanding the structure and processes inherent in social partnerships, organizations can be better supported as they develop and implement cross-sector initiatives aimed at making meaningful change in their communities.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I would like to thank my family, friends, and colleagues. To my parents, Bud and Beckie, for being models of hard work, generosity, and unwavering support. To Brian, Sarah, John, and Michael, for continually reminding me what is important in life. To Andy, for keeping me smiling, laughing, and loving. And to my friends and colleagues who continue to push my thinking, challenge my assumptions, and work tirelessly to make substantive change.

I am extremely appreciative for the guidance and support of my dissertation committee, Drs. Patrick McQuillan, Rebecca Lowenhaupt, and Katherine McNeill. Their friendly guidance, thought-provoking insights, and genuine curiosity contributed greatly to my intellectual growth during my years at Boston College.

Finally, I would like to express my deep respect and gratitude to the individuals who participated in this study for generously sharing their time, expertise, and reflections. I'd like to thank the current and former staff of the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative in particular, whose dedication and passion continue to inspire me.

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December 1, 2018

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Chapter 1: Introduction

> If poverty is a disease that infects an entire community in the form of unemployment and violence; failing schools and broken homes, then we can't just treat those symptoms in isolation. We have to heal that entire community. And we have to focus on what actually works.
>
> —Barack Obama, July 18, 2007

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) office is located in the heart of an urban neighborhood often left off of the tourist maps of the city. The office sits on one of the main streets in the neighborhood, a street that visually represents both hardship and hope. A few empty lots and boarded-up buildings sit beside youth-designed murals and a community greenhouse. Wrought with a history of disinvestment and structural oppression, this neighborhood is not unlike urban communities across the country facing concentrated poverty, family and community health issues, and pronounced educational opportunity and achievement gaps.

DSNI has a 30-year history of engaging in community change efforts in its Boston community of Dudley, a neighborhood within Roxbury. In 2012, DSNI was awarded a Promise Neighborhoods implementation grant to establish the Boston Promise Initiative (BPI). BPI is one of many Promise Neighborhoods that has received funding from the U.S. Department of Education. Central to the Promise Neighborhoods initiative, both locally with BPI and nationally through other initiatives, is creating networks among nonprofit service providers, educational institutions, government agencies, and local

organizations to build and strengthen a cradle-to-career pipeline.

BPI includes 36 partner organizations from across multiple sectors, including educational services, social and human services, health and wellness services, and six schools within the Dudley neighborhood. As the lead organization for BPI, DSNI sees its role as an extension of its years of work in the neighborhood. In its Promise Neighborhoods grant application, DSNI stated:

> Our fostering of resident engagement and leadership, our collaborative planning and decision-making tools, our history of successful implementation, and our ability to attract significant partnerships all point to the fact that we are ready to lead the planning for BPI. We have a strong track record of rooting change deep within the fabric of the neighborhood and this is what will drive the success and permanency of the BPI. (2012, pp. 37–38)

BPI is one example of a social partnership aimed at creating educational and community change by providing the necessary supports and resources for children, youth, and families to succeed. A social partnership by definition involves "the joining together of organizations from different sectors of society to tackle social problems" (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014, p. 1).

In a country that has touted education as a means of social and economic mobility since its inception, one of the few topics of agreement across party lines today in the United States is that urban schools are in dramatic need of improvement. Large discrepancies in academic achievement test scores between Black, Latino, and Native American students and their White and Asian peers have been stark and persistent. Research has shown that many of the issues that impact the academic opportunity gap are related to what Ladson-Billings (2006) called an "education debt," in which the structures and resources necessary to support student learning have not been provided to schools in

urban environments. From this perspective, it is imperative that educational reform efforts address community factors that impact student learning (Morgan, Knudsen, Nasir-Tucktuck, & Spies, 2015). Policymakers, researchers, and foundations are viewing partnerships like BPI as "instruments of effective policymaking and implementation" (Ansell, Reckhow, & Kelly, 2009, p. 717) for their potential to catalyze change that has been hard to come by.

According to Billett, Ovens, Clemans, and Seddon (2007), "Partnerships work is held to be the interactive and collaborative process of working together to identify, negotiate and articulate shared goals, and to develop processes for realizing and reviewing those goals" (pp. 645–646). This dissertation, focusing on BPI, attempts to shed light on the process of initiating and implementing a social partnership through a mixed methods, explanatory study. I use a survey and interviews with key informants to explore the structures and processes involved in initiating and maintaining a cross-sector collaborative.

In this introductory chapter I will provide a brief overview of my approach for this dissertation and describe the ways in which my research study offers a valuable and unique perspective on the subject. This chapter is broken up into eight sections with the intent to introduce the topics that I will expand on throughout the paper. First, I will describe the Promise Neighborhoods program, a specific type of social partnership that includes the Boston Promise Initiative. Second, I will briefly describe the educational policy context that is important to consider for this study. Third, I will discuss why I have chosen to take a network perspective and how this has affected the study. Fourth, I will explicate the problem statement that this study seeks to address. Fifth, I will provide the

purpose of the research and the specific questions that guide the study. Sixth, I will introduce the research methodology. Seventh, I will discuss the significance of this study and its intended contribution to policy and practice. Finally, I will describe the organization of the dissertation.

Promise Neighborhoods

BPI is one of many Department of Education–funded Promise Neighborhoods, an initiative with roots in Barack Obama's presidential campaign. As a candidate for president in 2007, Barack Obama spoke the words that open this chapter, calling for healing an entire community and focusing on what actually works when working to address poverty. During his presidency, Barack Obama acted on this assurance.

To support community-based organizations in solving issues in high-poverty neighborhoods, the Obama administration developed a strategy for neighborhood revitalization. The Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative was created under the following theory:

> An integrated, coordinated effort to increase the quality of a neighborhood's (1) educational and developmental, (2) commercial, (3) recreational, (4) physical, and (5) social assets, sustained by local leadership over an extended period, will improve resident well-being and community quality of life. (The White House Neighborhood Revitalization Working Group, n.d., p. 2)

The goal of this program was to revitalize neighborhoods of poverty into neighborhoods of opportunity (The White House Neighborhood Revitalization Working Group, n.d.).

In 2010, the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative introduced a federal grant opportunity called Promise Neighborhoods. The Promise Neighborhoods program was built on this vision: "All children growing up in Promise Neighborhoods have access to effective schools and strong systems of family and community support that will prepare

them to attain an excellent education and successfully transition to college and career" (U.S. Department of Education, 2018, para. 4). Promise Neighborhoods were intended to improve academic and community outcomes by:

1. Identifying and increasing the capacity of eligible entities that are focused on achieving results for children and youth throughout an entire neighborhood;
2. Building a complete continuum of cradle-to-career solutions of both educational programs and family and community supports, with great schools at the center;
3. Integrating programs and breaking down agency "silos" so that solutions are implemented effectively and efficiently across agencies;
4. Developing the local infrastructure of systems and resources needed to sustain and scale up proven, effective solutions across the broader region beyond the initial neighborhood; and
5. Learning about the overall impact of the Promise Neighborhoods program and about the relationship between particular strategies in Promise Neighborhoods and student outcomes, including through a rigorous evaluation of the program. (U.S. Department of Education, 2018, para. 4)

There are two types of Promise Neighborhoods grants funded by the Department of Education: planning grants and implementation grants. Planning grants are 1-year grants to support the development of a plan to implement a Promise Neighborhoods initiative and consist of approximately $500,000 for the year. Most awardees of planning grants applied for implementation grants in the subsequent years. Implementation grants are funded for a 5-year period. Each implementation grant consists of between $1,500,000 and $6,000,000 each year for the 5-year period.

The grant opportunity had a competitive vetting process, eliciting applications from across the United States, spanning urban and rural areas as well as Native American territories. The proposal process required organizations to clearly define a neighborhood area, build a cradle-to-career continuum of solutions and supports, strategically use data, increase their organizational capacity, commit to working with a national evaluator, and collaborate with other funded initiatives. Eight years into the program, 18 initiatives have been funded with implementation grants, five in the 2011 grant cycle, seven in the 2012 grant cycle, and six in the 2016 grant cycle (see Table 1). A full list of Promise Neighborhoods grants is provided in Appendix B.

Table 1

Promise Neighborhoods Award Funding

Fiscal year (FY)	Planning grants	Implementation grants	Funding for new awards	Funding for continuation awards
FY 2010	21	0	$10,000,000	$0
FY 2011	15	5	$29,940,000	$0
FY 2012	10	7	$56,900,000	$25,900,000
FY 2013	0	0	$0	$56,754,000
FY 2014	0	0	$0	$56,754,000
FY 2015	0	0	$0	$56,754,000
FY 2016	0	6	$30,000,000	$37,059,000

Note. Data from "Programs: Promise Neighborhoods: Awards," U.S. Department of Education, 2016. Retrieved from http://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/awards.html.

As mentioned above, Promise Neighborhoods are a specific type of social partnership. A social partnership involves "the joining together of organizations from different sectors of society to tackle social problems" (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014, p. 1). Social partnerships emerge when diverse organizations collaborate to achieve collective

goals. Austin and Seitanidi (2012) argued that as social problems become more complex and urgent, there is an increased necessity for collaboration between multiple organizations across sectors.

The underlying premise of Promise Neighborhoods and other similar social partnerships is that providing access to resources, services, and supports in a comprehensive and coherent manner will have the greatest cumulative effect on educational and community outcomes (Henig, Riehl, Rebell, & Wolff, 2015). According to Henig et al. (2015):

> This comprehensive approach to educational opportunity posits that providing such services and supports is integral to the concept of equal educational opportunity. It recognizes that most American children thrive academically because they enjoy the benefits of preschool, quality K-12 schooling, constructive learning opportunities out of school, health care, and family support, but, for children living in poverty, many of these vital educational resources are unavailable or inadequate, resulting in dramatic gaps in academic achievement. (p. 20)

The comprehensive approach proposed by Promise Neighborhoods works for educational and community change on multiple fronts using a range of strategies.

Educational Policy Context

Social partnerships, like Promise Neighborhoods, operate within a broader educational policy context. Considerable interest in partnerships as "instruments of effective policymaking and implementation" (Ansell et al., 2009, p. 717) has been driven by neoliberal reforms that have rolled back state provisions and opened up welfare service provisions to private and civil actors (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014). Within the United States, neoliberalism and the subsequent shifting role of the government are

drivers of educational change and are important for understanding the context of the Promise Neighborhoods program.

Harvey (2007) defined neoliberalism as:

> A theory of political economic practices proposing that human well-being can be best advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade. (p. 22)

This ideology impacts an array of social policies and forms of governance, and promotes the privatization of social goods and the withdrawal of the government from providing social welfare (Au & Ferrare, 2015). According to Fabricant and Fine (2013), "neoliberal policy has a clear and disparate impact on poor and working-class communities, communities of color, and immigrant groups" (p. 138). Neoliberal ideology assumes that everyone has equal power in society and that equity can be gained through individual freedom, though this has been heavily contested (see, e.g., Au & Ferrare, 2015; Fabricant & Fine, 2013).

Au and Ferrare (2015) argued that under neoliberalism the purpose of education shifts to the production of human capital and meeting the needs of the economy rather than serving the social and collective needs of communities. A neoliberal ideology promotes competitive markets using high-stakes standardized tests as a means of ranking students, teachers, and schools (Au & Ferrare, 2015). Since the establishment of No Child Left Behind in 2012, these standardized test scores have been central to defining success and failure. High-stakes scores have led to significant decisions being made about policy directions, teachers' tenure and salary, district and school funding, and school closures (Fabricant & Fine, 2013). Many argue that the consequences of these

reform efforts have been harmful for low-income communities of color (Howard & Navarro, 2016; Fabricant & Fine, 2013).

Stemming from a neoliberal ideology is the changing role of government, specifically a shift from government to governance. Lipman (2011) elaborated:

> The shift from government by elected state bodies and a degree of democratic accountability to governance by experts and managers and decision making by judicial authority and executive order is central to neoliberal policy making. . . . Public-private partnerships, appointed managers, and publicly accountable bodies comprised of appointed state and corporate leaders make decisions about urban development, transportation, schools, and other public infrastructure using business rationales. In these arrangements, the state acts as an agent of capital. (p. 13)

Traditionally, government carries out policy through hierarchical and bureaucratic methods (Ball & Junemann, 2012). A shift to governance rooted in neoliberalism allows for changes in the provision, monitoring, and evaluation of public sector services and brings new players with informal authority into policy conversations (Ball, 2010).

The shift has important implications in education around the planning, funding, and delivery of educational services, as interactions among actors influence the policy process in new ways (Ball, 2010; Ball & Junemann, 2012). As within the broader neoliberal movement, governance in education also entails the transfer of power from government structures to informal networks of private individuals and organizations, creating new educational markets (Au & Ferrare, 2015), as seen in the increase in charter schools, school choice, and for-profit educational services, all of which are framed as means of promoting educational opportunities for all students. According to Ball and Junemann (2012):

> While in education the establishment of "new governance" is uneven and experimental, it is also, for the time being at least, inexorable. It is introducing new players and agents, a set of new languages and policies, new interests and opportunities/commitments and new "authorities" into public sector education, while also changing the meaning of what public sector education is. (p. 37)

An important consequence of the shift is an increase in educational grantmaking, such as that of the Promise Neighborhoods program. The funds do not come no-strings-attached. Rather, according to Ball and Junemann (2012), "forms of business research and due diligence to identify or vet potential recipients of donations, and the use of metrics and other indicators to monitor the impacts and effects of donations on social problems" (p. 52) are important aspects for determining return on investment. The federal government in some cases has shifted its policymaking to mirror a philanthropic model through programs such as Promise Neighborhoods, where educational practice is directed by requirements and obligations attached to funding. Promise Neighborhoods and other social partnerships operate within the context of neoliberal education reform and the increased prevalence of network governance.

A Network Perspective

Central to the study of social partnerships is a focus on the relationships, or the "joining together" (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014) between partnering organizations. Social network theory is a valuable tool in this analysis in order to more fully examine and understand relationships. Social network theory is a way of thinking about social systems that focuses on relationships. According to Ibarra, Kilduff, and Tsai (2005), "One of the distinctive advantages of the network approach has always been its ability to bring together quantitative, qualitative, and graphical analyses and to focus these resources on theory-driven research questions" (p. 368). Social network theory provides a means by

which to explore two important aspects of social partnerships in my research study: (a) the network structure of the partnership, which includes the organizations involved and the patterns of their interactions, and (b) the nature of the interactions between these organizations, which are also referred to as network processes.

Although social network theory sounds complicated, many of its principles are quite common in our daily lives. For instance, let's take an elementary school cafeteria as an example. This network consists of students and teachers, called *nodes*, who are connected through relationships, called *ties*. The pattern that these ties create is called a *network structure*. Within the cafeteria, each individual is a node and the relationships between individuals are ties. Some groups may have strong, dense ties—for instance, a group of friends who cluster together near the end of a table. Other nodes may have fewer, weaker ties, such as a new student who has not had a chance to meet other students. No matter the case, each node occupies a particular location within the network structure that includes every other individual in the cafeteria.

Social network theory is also concerned with the processes within networks in addition to the network structure. According to Borgatti and Halgin (2011), "Network theory consists of elaborating how a given network structure interacts with a given process (such as information flows) to generate outcomes for the nodes or the networks as a whole" (p. 1172–1173). Thus, in addition to the structure of the network there is also a focus on the processes and relationships associated with this structure, particularly in terms of the resources embedded in the network and the flow of such resources throughout the network. This aspect of social network theory is rooted in the concept of social capital. Social capital is one of the basic conceptual foundations of social network

theory. Although social capital has been discussed and operationalized in different ways, Lin (2002) defined social capital as "the resources embedded in social relations and social structures which can be mobilized to increase the likelihood of success in action" (p. 24).

Returning to the above example, students may be eating lunch in the cafeteria before a big exam. The network contains information and knowledge as resources. These resources are available in many ways to those who are connected to each other through relationships. In this context the flow of these resources could initially be through conversations. For instance, one student may be holding a study group, or another student may be sitting next to the teacher giving the exam and asking questions. Students will have different access to the social capital inherent in the network based on their location in the cafeteria.

The concept of social capital can also be applied at the organizational level. Although a number of researchers have examined social capital at this level (see, e.g., McGrath, Krackhardt, & Blythe 2003; Song, Nerur, & Teng, 2007; Tenkasi & Chesmore, 2003), Ibarra et al. (2005) provided a definition for communal social capital as "the benefit that accrues to the collectivity as a result of the positive relations between different groups, organization units, or hierarchical levels" (p. 116). This level of analysis of social capital is important in terms of examining resources embedded and accessed within a network of organizations in a social partnership.

A network perspective that encompasses social capital is present in the literature on social partnerships. "Evidence suggests," according to Ibarra et al. (2005), "that when the knowledge base of an industry is complex, expanding, and widely dispersed, the locus

of innovation is likely to reside in the interstices between organizations rather than in individual firms" (p. 361). The social capital literature posits that the manner in which relationships are structured may have significant implications for what can be accomplished by that network (Nowell, 2009). Building social capital as a means to understand and address community issues is one of the main reasons policymakers are looking at social partnerships as a way to address complex community issues (Billett et al., 2007).

A network perspective, specifically utilizing social network theory, is an important theoretical tool to study social partnerships because it focuses on both the structure and process of the partnerships. Further, it prioritizes the importance of relationships and attends to the flow of resources within a network. Although social network theory has most often been applied to individual interactions, researchers are beginning to apply this theory at the organizational level, which my research study also sought to do.

Problem Statement

Promise Neighborhoods and other social partnerships require cross-sector organizations to work together to address complex social issues. According to Billett et al. (2007), however, "even when there is a common set of concerns, the process of working together is complex and challenging, often contested and requiring new ways of working and in changing circumstances" (p. 638). As mentioned above, the Promise Neighborhoods program is aimed at improving the educational and community outcomes of children and youth in communities through funding social partnerships. However, not a lot is known about establishing and managing Promise Neighborhoods, particularly in

terms of integrating programs across sectors and developing a local infrastructure of systems and resources—two main components of the Promise Neighborhoods program. Even with shared goals in mind, the work of a social partnership is challenging and many initiatives struggle to accomplish their goals (Kubisch, Auspos, Brown, & Dewar, 2010; Nowell, 2009). This lack of knowledge comes at a cost, as thousands of community organizations across the country are embarking on this work, the Department of Education and funders across the nation are investing millions of dollars into social partnership work, and, most importantly, children and families continue to be marginalized and underserved.

Early and ongoing research on social partnerships, however, can increase the chances of achieving significant change (Butterfoss, 2007). According to Waddock (2014), connecting research to practice in this area is crucially important for successful cross-sector partnerships: "In the quest to create and improve the effectiveness of cross-sector collaborations of all sorts, particularly in the boundary-blurred world that we now face, we clearly need more research and highly developed theory and empirical research" (p. 340). By better understanding the structure and processes inherent in organizing and maintaining a social partnership, communities can be better supported as they develop and implement these instruments of change.

Research Questions

My research study sought to explore the BPI partner network in order to better understand the process of establishing and managing a social partnership. Specifically, I sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the social network structures of the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of interorganizational communication and collaboration?
    (a) What do these networks suggest in terms of network connectivity?
    (b) What do these networks suggest in terms of network influence?
2. How might these social network structures impact efforts at educational and community change?
3. What network processes surface as important for the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of impacting efforts at educational and community change?

This study was undertaken in partnership with DSNI in hopes that results might provide insights that will be useful for DSNI and its partner organizations. At multiple points during the research, as described further in Chapter 3, I collaborated with DSNI on the design of the research elements and organizational sense making of the data. Coburn, Penuel, and Geil (2013) described this aspect of research partnership as *mutualism*, or "sustained interaction that benefits both researchers and practitioners" (p. 3). They continue, "Mutualism is important because it helps ensure that different perspectives—practitioners' and researchers'—contribute to defining the focus of the work" (Coburn et al., 2013, p. 3).

Overview of the Methodology

I employed a two-phased, mixed methods design to answer my research questions, which is further expanded upon and detailed in Chapter 3. The research design generally followed the explanatory design put forth by Creswell and Plano Clark (2006), where an initial quantitative phase is followed by a second, qualitative phase (see Appendix A). The overall purpose of this type of design, according to Creswell and Plano

Clark, is to utilize the qualitative data to help explain, clarify, or build on the quantitative data. Thus, the research design for this study included two distinct yet mutually informing phases: (a) social network analysis, and (b) qualitative interviews.

The first phase of data collection used a survey instrument (Appendix C) that was developed and informed by the conceptual framework of social partnerships, the theoretical framework of social network theory, relevant literature I review in Chapter 2, and collaboration with DSNI. The survey included questions related to participant and organizational background information, respondent characteristics, beliefs about BPI, and two questions that allowed for a social network analysis of interorganizational communication and collaboration.

The second phase of data collection involved qualitative interviews with key informants (interview protocol attached as Appendix D). In line with the survey, the interviews addressed participant and organizational background information, respondent characteristics, and beliefs about BPI. Further, results from the social network analysis generated from the survey were presented to interviewees and used to facilitate a discussion about how the BPI partner network may impact efforts at educational and community change. A mixed methods explanatory design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2006) is well suited for the study of social partnerships because it allows for multiple ways of accessing and visualizing data about the initiative.

Potential Significance of the Study

This research study is timely, as 18 Promise Neighborhood initiatives across the United States are in full implementation, including BPI. The future of the Promise Neighborhoods program is yet to be determined, but social partnerships in general

continue to propagate (Henig, Riehl, Houston, Rebell, & Wolff, 2016). Henig et al. (2016) recently completed a nationwide scan of social partnerships anchored within education and found 182 initiatives currently operating. Understanding the process of establishing and managing social partnerships will be valuable for communities as they engage in their own cross-sector initiatives as well as funders who are investing in similar initiatives.

Importantly, this study also offers potential significance for DSNI. It is my goal that the research process itself be a learning tool for the organization and positively impact organizational decision-making at the local level. It is my hope that my study can support both local impact as well as generalizable findings for the field.

Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is organized into five chapters, including this introductory chapter. In Chapter 2 I will review the extant literature on social partnerships broadly and Promise Neighborhoods specifically. In addition, I will describe the complexities of social partnership that previous research has surfaced. In Chapter 3 I will fully describe and explain the research methodology, including a discussion on researcher reflexivity, a description of the research setting, and details about the study's data collection and analysis methods. I will also discuss issues of validity relevant to my research study. In Chapter 4 I will present the results of my research, organized by the three research questions. Finally, in Chapter 5 I will highlight key conclusions of the study, discuss limitations of this study, and identify topics for further inquiry.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Social partnerships are being advanced and funded as a strategy for improving educational and community outcomes across the United States (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014; Henig et al., 2015). Policymakers, researchers, and foundations are viewing these partnerships as "instruments of effective policymaking and implementation" (Ansell et al., 2009, p. 717). This literature review seeks to understand what is known about social partnerships, why they are being advanced and funded as instruments of policymaking and implementation, and how they might impact educational and community outcomes.

This literature review is presented in four main sections. In the first section, I will describe how social partnerships have been defined and operationalized in the literature, starting broad and then narrowing the scope specifically to Promise Neighborhoods. In the second section, I will describe the complexities of social partnerships that have been identified in the literature, paying particular attention to challenges and the importance of networks, organizations, and people. Whereas the first section attempts to answer the questions of *what*, the second section attempts to address questions of *why* and *how*. Finally, I will conclude this chapter by discussing how the literature has impacted the decisions I have made in the current research.

I primarily utilized Education Resources Information Center, Education Research Complete, and Google Scholar online journal databases to locate relevant literature. My initial review of the literature focused on social partnerships in general. Although my main focus was in education, I included research from multiple fields and disciplines, including community psychology, organizational behavior and theory, sociology, and health. The second wave of my literature search focused on areas that surfaced as

important from the initial review and was targeted toward specific concepts within and outside of the social partnership context.

What Is a Social Partnership?

Defining Social Partnerships

The literature on social partnerships is quite broad and far-reaching. Social partnerships cross many academic boundaries and tackle issues such as environmental sustainability (see, e.g., Bitzer & Glasbergen, 2015), health care (see, e.g., Rummery, 2009), poverty (see, e.g., Evans, Rosen, Kesten, & Moore, 2014), and, among others, education (see, e.g., Billett et al., 2007). The definitions of social partnership also vary but coalesce on particular key aspects of the nature of the relationship between entities. Despite different definitions provided in the literature, and different levels of analysis, all social partnerships are rooted in three defining characteristics outlined by Crane and Seitanidi (2014): they involve (a) the joining together of organizations (b) across sectors (c) to address a social problem.

There have been many definitions offered for different kinds of social partnership. For instance, Cardazone, Sy, Chik, and Corlew (2014) used the term *coalition* and define a community coalition broadly as "groups of individuals or organizations that work together to achieve a common goal" (p. 347). Ansell et al. (2009) also use the term coalition but distinguish between advocacy coalitions and civic coalitions; according to the authors, an advocacy coalition is "a network dominated by a cohesive group of allies united by their strong convergence on shared policy core beliefs, which may differentiate them from other groups" (p. 720) whereas a civic coalition is "an inclusive network that unites diverse stakeholders; the policy beliefs of these stakeholders may vary, but the

network will not be differentiated into subgroups by policy beliefs" (p. 720). Kania and Kramer (2011) describe *collective impact* as "the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem" (p. 36). With a narrower focus, Henig et al. (2016) define *local cross-sector collaborations for education* as being locally organized, large scale, cross sector, inclusive of a school district, education outcomes focused, and formal. Despite the different definitions provided in the literature, all social partnerships are rooted in the three defining characteristics outlined by Crane and Seitanidi (2014): they involve the joining together of organizations across sectors to address a social problem.

To situate this dissertation research on Promise Neighborhoods within the literature on social partnerships, I will review below three broad bodies of literature. First, I will review the literature on comprehensive community initiatives, which Promise Neighborhoods have strong roots in and share a lot of defining characteristics with. Next, I will discuss the literature related to collective impact initiatives, which is emerging as the primary framework for social partnerships and Promise Neighborhoods. I will then present the research to date that is available on Promise Neighborhoods. Finally, I will summarize this section to elucidate important defining characteristics of social partnerships writ large, and Promise Neighborhoods specifically.

Comprehensive Community Initiatives

One type of social partnership that was particularly prominent in the 1990s and early 2000s are *comprehensive community initiatives* (CCIs). Chaskin, Joseph, and Chipenda-Dansokho (1997) identified four defining characteristics of CCIs: They (a) focus on geographically defined target areas; (b) provide support for a process of

strategic planning based on community assets, resources, and needs; (c) insist on community participation in the governance, planning, and implementation of development activities; and (d) focus on comprehensive development by attempting to integrate economic, physical, and human development activities. Kubisch, Auspos, Brown, and Dewar (2010) and Hyman (2002) also included community building as a defining characteristic of CCIs. According to Hyman, community building is guided by two fundamental beliefs: "that the community or neighborhood is the appropriate focus for revitalization efforts; and that enhancing the capacity of communities to engage and support residents is essential to success" (2002, p. 196). This type of social partnership is important to understand for the current research because of its emphasis on being place-based and prioritizing community building, characteristics also prominent in current Promise Neighborhoods initiatives.

The 1990s witnessed a swelling of interest and investment in cross-sector efforts to address the needs of communities that feature concentrated poverty (Henig et al., 2015; Kubisch et al., 2010) and comprehensive community initiatives could be found in almost every major U.S. city (Henig et al., 2015). CCIs aim to concentrate resources and combine learning from multiple sectors to implement an intervention "in which the whole would be greater than the sum of its parts, a vehicle that would catalyze the transformation of distressed neighborhoods" (Kubisch et al., 2010, p. 9). The goals of these initiatives go beyond individual and family outcomes to incorporate community and systems change (Chaskin, 2001; Chaskin et al., 1997).

Rooted in many of the principles of community organizing (see, e.g., Alinsky, 1989), CCIs aim to create systems change through community engagement and

community building:

> CCIs took an asset-oriented approach and sought to build on the strengths of the community, ensure that the voices of those who were most affected by neighborhood issues were central in developing the common agenda for change, and involve them in driving its implementation to ensure maximum effectiveness and sustainability (Henig et al., 2015, p. 16).

Kubisch et al. (2010) estimated that over $1 billion in philanthropic money was invested in CCIs between 1990 and 2010. Although the investments did not always achieve the wide-reaching systems change proponents had hoped for, there were accomplishments. In their review of CCIs, Kubisch et al. (2010) stated:

> Most can show improvements in the well-being of individual residents who participated in programs in their target neighborhoods. Some produced physical change in their neighborhood through housing production and rehabilitation, some reduced crime, and a few also sparked commercial development. Most can demonstrate increased neighborhood capacity in the form of stronger leadership, networks, or organizations, or in improved connections between the neighborhood and external entities in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. A few can point to accomplishments in policy and systems reform. (p. 15)

Due to a variety of reasons, the interest in and funding of CCIs waned in the early 2000s. The decrease in enthusiasm and experimentation in CCIs perhaps was the result of economic recovery, the Republican takeover of Congress in the mid-1990s, and a shift in educational policy that prioritized standards-based reform and accountability as primary strategies for increasing educational success (Henig et al., 2015). Further, the benefits resulting from the large investments in CCIs were not always clear. According to Kubisch et al. (2010):

> It is clear that the outcomes of most community change initiatives did not match the high hopes placed on them. The expectation was that these efforts would

> produce a greater impact than narrower programmatic interventions, that the whole would add up to more than the sum of the parts, and that they would unleash a cascade of change that would transform highly distressed communities. The fact that CCIs and related efforts did not achieve these ambitious goals has, in the eyes of critics, relegated them to the category of "failures." (p. 49)

The next section, however, describes the more recent resurgence of interest in social partnerships, specifically in terms of the enthusiasm around Kania and Kramer's (2011) conceptualization of collective impact.

Collective Impact Initiatives

More recently, *collective impact* is gaining steam as a major framework for social partnerships. Kania and Kramer (2011) defined collective impact as "the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem" (p. 36). The authors outlined five conditions for successful collaboration in collective impact initiatives: (a) a common agenda, (b) a shared measurement system, (c) mutually reinforcing activities, (d) continuous communication, and (e) a backbone support organization. In a 2011 article, Kania and Kramer distinguished collective impact initiatives from other collaborations (see Table 2).

Collective impact initiatives are social partnerships; they involve the joining together of organizations from across sectors to address a social issue (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014). However, the term *collective impact*, as well as the defining characteristics proposed by Kania and Kramer (2011), has gained strength as a primary framework for social partnerships. Since its publication in the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Kania and Kramer's 2011 article on collective impact has been cited over 1,300 times, according to Google Scholar (as of November 2018).

Table 2

Types of Collaborations

Collaboration type	Description
Funder collaborative	A group of funders interested in supporting the same issue who pool their resources. Generally, participants do not adopt an overarching evidence-based plan of action or a shared measurement system, nor do they engage in differentiated activities beyond check writing or engaging stakeholders from other sectors.
Public-private partnership	A partnership formed between government and private sector organizations to deliver specific services or benefits. They are often targeted narrowly, such as developing a particular drug to fight a single disease, and usually don't engage the full set of stakeholders that are affected by the issue, such as the potential drug's distribution system.
Multi-stakeholder initiative	A set of voluntary activities by stakeholders from different sectors around a common theme. Typically, these initiatives lack any shared measurement of impact and the supporting infrastructure to forge any true alignment of efforts or accountability for results.
Social sector network	A group of individuals or organizations fluidly connected through purposeful relationships, whether formal or informal. Collaboration is generally ad hoc, and most often the emphasis is placed on information sharing and targeted short-term actions, rather than a sustained and structured initiative.
Collective impact initiative	A long-term commitment by a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem. Their actions are supported by a shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities, and ongoing communication, and are staffed by an independent backbone organization.

Note. From "Collective Impact," by J. Kania and M. Kramer, 2011, *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, *9*(1), pp. 35–41.

Recently, the academic journal *Community Development* had a special issue dedicated to collective impact that included different applications of the collective impact model to a variety of community development issues (Walzer, Weaver, & McGuire,

2016). For instance, Schwartz, Weaver, Pei, and Miller (2016) described university and community partnerships in collective impact initiatives, using Vibrant Communities Canada as a case study to illustrate their findings. Raderstrong and Boyea-Robinson's (2016) article described the how and why of working with community residents in collective impact initiatives. They drew on extant literature and semi-structured interviews to develop effective approaches for engaging with community members. Other articles in the special issue focused on collective impact indicators (Wood, 2016), examining power and privilege in collective impact (LeChasseur, 2016), and policy-mandated collaboration (Gillam, Counts, & Garstka, 2016), among others.

In a recent nationwide scan of social partnerships focused on education, Henig et al. (2016) found that of the social partnerships that began after the publication of Kania and Kramer's 2011 article, "nearly two-thirds employed the term [collective impact], reflecting the strong normative attraction of the label and the ideas behind it" (pp. 21–22). Of all 182 partnerships that were identified in Henig et al.'s (2016) scan, over 40% of them use the term collective impact on their websites. The Department of Education has not used the term collective impact on any of its Promise Neighborhoods materials; however, the defining characteristics of Promise Neighborhoods and collective impact initiatives align well.

Promise Neighborhoods

Promise Neighborhoods are a specific type of social partnership and are formally funded by the Department of Education. As mentioned above, 18 initiatives have been awarded with implementation grants ranging from $6,000,000 to $30,000,000 over 5-year periods. The Promise Neighborhoods program was created to support community-based

initiatives in high-poverty neighborhoods. Promise Neighborhoods by definition fit the descriptions of CCIs, collective impact initiatives, and, most broadly, social partnerships.

A search on the Education Research Complete database for scholarly, peer-reviewed journal articles with the keyword "Promise Neighborhood*" produced nine results (as of May 2017). A similar Education Resources Information Center search revealed only three results, all of which were duplicates from the first search. One reason for the lack of research articles available could be the recency of the implementation of the Promise Neighborhoods initiative. Additional research on Promise Neighborhoods may be ongoing and may be published in the near future. Another reason for the lack of literature could be that there have been a limited number of initiatives that have been fully funded, limiting the ability of researchers to access the initiatives. The articles that are available offer multiple insights into Promise Neighborhoods initiatives.

Two of the articles, written by Hill, Herts, and Devance (2014) and Komro, Flay, Biglan, and the Promise Neighborhoods Research Consortium (2011), introduced conceptual frameworks. The earliest of the articles, Komro et al., described the "science-based framework for the promotion of child health and development within distressed high-poverty neighborhoods" (p. 111) with the intent to inform the development process of Promise Neighborhoods. Komro et al. proposed four primary outcome domains—cognitive development, social/emotional competence, absence of psychological and behavioral problems, and physical health—and potential influences of these outcomes. The authors designed a "Creating Nurturing Environments" framework with the intent to help guide community-wide initiatives such as Promise Neighborhoods, improve child outcomes, and reduce health and educational disparities.

Hill et al. (2014) also introduced a framework for practice and focused more on organizational collaboration than specific outcomes. The authors described the framework used by Rutgers University and its partners in developing the Newark Fairmount Promise Neighborhood, which received a planning grant for nearly $500,000 in 2012. Hill et al. provided a model for collaborative university–community partnerships that combines Kania and Kramer's (2011) conditions of collective impact with a partnership development framework from Gray (1989). The authors described the role Rutgers University–Newark played in the process of developing the Promise Neighborhoods plan, from problem setting to direction setting to implementation.

Two of the research articles utilized the publicly available Promise Neighborhoods application narratives for their analyses. The application narratives were submitted by organizations for the Promise Neighborhoods request for proposals. Miller, Willis, and Scanlan (2013) used the applications, in addition to interviews and archival data, to describe how educational leaders will be called to bridge organizational and sector gaps in the context of Promise Neighborhoods and similar initiatives. Unlike Komro et al. (2011) and Hill et al. (2014), Miller et al. (2013) did not posit a model or framework but rather attempted to posit how expansive reform initiatives such as Promise Neighborhoods alter traditional conceptualizations of educational leadership. In a similar type of analysis, Hudson (2013) used the Promise Neighborhoods application narratives to study the role of higher education in the awarded partnerships. Hudson completed a qualitative analysis of 21 Promise Neighborhoods awardee applications from the 2012 grant cycle. The analysis examined the varied commitments of higher education institutions to these initiatives. The author explored the potential implications and roles

that institutions of higher education can have through community engagement in initiatives like Promise Neighborhoods. Both Hudson and Miller et al. (2013) focused their analyses on the implications for a particular type of stakeholder in the initiation and implementation of Promise Neighborhoods—educational leaders and institutions of higher education, respectively.

Four articles provided qualitative case studies of specific initiatives. Horsford and Sampson (2014) provided a case study of the emergent Las Vegas Promise Neighborhood, primarily using archival data. The authors, who are also researchers and conveners for the initiative, focus on community capacity. They stated:

> We discovered that while efforts to revitalize neighborhoods through collaboration, capacity building, resident engagement, local leadership, comprehensive support, and sustained and leveraged investment—all of which the Obama Administration highlighted as successful strategies for revitalizing neighborhoods—require a fundamental level of community capacity without which it is nearly impossible for low-capacity communities to compete for much-needed capacity building resources. (Horsford & Sampson, 2014, p. 985)

The authors argued that community capacity building in socially and economically distressed communities should prioritize community organizing as a capacity-building strategy, concluding that "the communities with the greatest need are often the least able to obtain federal support" (Horsford & Sampson, 2014, p. 987).

Miller, Scanlan, and Phillippo (2017) presented their qualitative study of three years of collaborative work in a rural community in the western United States and Geller, Doykos, Craven, Bess, and Nation (2014) utilized focus group and interview data from a developing Promise Neighborhoods program to focus on the role of trust, particularly with neighborhood residents. Both articles emphasized the importance of the

relationships between stakeholders. Geller et al. found relatively low levels of relational trust between residents, between residents and local institutions, and between residents and school staff. Miller et al. (2017) argued that school and community leaders engaged in cross-sector collaboration should attend to cultural matters within the communities of focus.

Finigan-Carr, Vandigo, Uretsky, Oloyede, and Mayden (2015) also used focus groups in their case study of the Promise Heights Initiative West Baltimore, which received a planning grant in 2012. Interviews were completed in 2013. Through focus groups and interviews, the researchers aimed to learn about the issues community residents felt future interventions should address as well as why these issues are important. The issues that emerged from the focus groups—mental health and self-esteem, parental support, early childhood education, and access to healthy food options—provided insight for the continued work of the Promise Heights Initiative.

Finally, Jenning's (2012) article was a response to the increasing calls for place-based strategies of change in urban neighborhoods, such as Promise Neighborhoods. The author introduced a "neighborhood distress score" that can be used to target services and encourage resident participation. Jennings used Boston, where this study is also focused, as his case study. Of the research that has been written to date on Promise Neighborhoods, only four articles have been published documenting research on specific initiatives. This dissertation is intended to contribute to the literature by exploring the ways in which Promise Neighborhoods are initiated and managed. Further, as described in Chapter 1, two of the foundational Promise Neighborhoods strategies are integrating programs and breaking down agency silos so that solutions are implemented effectively

and efficiently across agencies and the local infrastructure is developed for the systems and resources needed to sustain and scale up proven, effective solutions across the broader region beyond the initial neighborhood (U.S. Department of Education, 2018). These two aspects of Promise Neighborhoods have yet to be explored in the research, a contribution I hope to make with the present study.

The Complexities of Social Partnerships

As the previous section makes clear, there are numerous types of social partnerships; however, all social partnerships involve the joining together of organizations from different sectors to address a social problem. In this section, I will move beyond the defining characteristics of social partnerships to explore the research literature on the complex nature of social partnerships. Whereas the above section attempted to answer questions of *what*, this section will attempt to answer the questions of *why* and *how*. First, I will discuss the findings from the literature that describe the many challenges social partnerships face. Second, I will discuss why networks matter, and how they have been discussed and researched in the literature. Third, I will review what the literature has said about organizations and organizational capacity. Fourth, I will review the research on why people matter for social partnerships. In this section particularly, I will extend the review outside of social partnerships to bring in literature on organizational behavior. I will argue that relational outcomes such as value alignment, commitment, and identification are missing from the social partnership literature but may be of great value. I will then conclude Chapter 2 by outlining the limitations to the existing research, summarizing the main points of the extant literature, and sharing how these main points have directly impacted the decisions I have made in my research study.

The Challenge Is Real

One thing is certain about social partnerships: the challenge is real. They are difficult to establish and even harder to sustain (Provan, Veazie, Staten, & Teufel-Shone, 2005). Many challenges have been discussed in the literature. Specifically, challenges that are persistent across partnerships, and will be expanded upon below, include building a shared vision, organizational and community capacity, lack of evidence, and issues of power.

Building a shared vision. One of the defining characteristics of a social partnership is its effort to address a social issue. In order to address a social issue in an effective way, a shared vision is required (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014; Gray & Purdy, 2014; Kania & Kramer, 2011). Chaskin et al. (1997) highlighted the challenge of reaching consensus around social partnership work. In an in-depth analysis of one social partnership they wrote, "Although all participants grasped the strategy of fostering change in a variety of areas of community life, there was little consensus as to how those changes could be linked to one another to greater effect" (Chaskin et al., 1997, p. 441). Ansell et al. (2009) also highlighted the challenge of maintaining a shared vision while also attempting to facilitate participation among diverse groups of stakeholders. In their study, and specific to the reform coalition they were researching, Ansell et al. reported, "This coalition would probably have to negotiate some compromises regarding the speed of reform implementation to maintain unity among the broader set of stakeholders" (2009, p. 733).

Even if agreement is made about a shared vision, turning this vision into practice offers an additional set of challenges. Gray and Purdy (2014) described the conflict

around reaching agreement in social partnerships: “When shared goals and a common agenda are agreed upon, conflicts still may arise related to the process, substance, or relationships among cross-sector partners” (p. 208). Billett et al. (2007) engaged with 10 longstanding social partnerships, through interviews and a follow-up survey, to attempt to understand the principles and practices that underpinned their work. The researchers found that “while social partnerships focus on a common problem,” they may not always agree on the best way to address the problem: “partners likely bring distinct perspectives about the problem and how it can be solved and what costs are sustainable; in this and other partnerships, there may be different and competing interests being enacted” (Billett et al. 2007, p. 648). Chaskin et al. (1997) also found competing motivating factors to be a challenge for social partnerships. They found that partnerships are often under pressure to meet specific requirements and timelines outlined from the funder, and that this pressure superseded the importance of partnership work on the ground.

In Henig et al.’s (2015) review of social partnerships, they also described this challenge, writing, “Participants may encounter problems of bias, the privileging of certain perspectives, and outright exclusion.” The authors continue, “Conformity and groupthink may develop; come collaborations can result in social loafing and free rider problems, and collaboration may produce an aversion to further joint work if the effort fails” (Henig et al., 2015, p. 40). So, despite a shared vision being important to the process of creating and managing a social partnership, it is no easy task to find alignment among partner organizations.

Organizational and community capacity. Another challenge that was consistently described in the social partnership literature was limited organizational

capacity to engage in partnership work. The need for a strong lead organization with existing relationships within a community is a persistent theme within the literature (Chaskin, 2001; Evans et al., 2014; Henig et al., 2015; Horsford & Sampson, 2014; Kania & Kramer, 2011). Chaskin et al. (1997) described the earliest challenges social partnerships face in terms of operational and infrastructure barriers, such as time, resources, and organizational structures:

> Despite the fact that each collaborative has some form of executive committee that oversees collaborative activities, these committees have spent most of their time focused on issues of administration and have had little opportunity to discuss possibilities for program integration. (p. 441)

For instance, Evans et al. (2014) examined the formation Miami Thrives, an emerging poverty reduction coalition in South Florida. Their research focused specifically on organizational capacity and organizational empowerment among organizations charged to lead social partnerships. Using social network analysis and follow-up interviews, Evans et al. found that interviewees consistently praised the lead organization's history of building community relationships as an important factor. However, many of the interviewees raised concerns about the lead organization's capacity to effectively manage a social partnership, particularly in terms of structural and organizational systems, project management, limited coalition-building knowledge and expertise, and inability to effectively guide a collective process.

Horsford and Sampson (2014) examined capacity specifically in terms of Promise Neighborhoods. In addition to organizational capacity, the authors included issues of community capacity. Horsford and Samspon drew on Chaskin's (2001) definition of community capacity, as "the interaction of human capital, organizational resources, and

social capital existing within a given community that can be leveraged to solve collective problems" (p. 259). Horsford and Sampson concluded that the communities with the greatest need often do not have the community or organizational capacity to compete for funding opportunities like Promise Neighborhoods. The work of partnerships is challenges, and many communities and organizations do not have experience creating and managing complex social partnerships among diverse stakeholders.

(Lack of) evidence. Another common challenge social partnerships face is the difficulty of determining impact with evidence, or, rather, the lack of evidence. Kania and Kramer (2011) argued that using a shared measurement system is essential for a social partnership:

> Collecting data and measuring results consistently on a short list of indicators at the community level and across all participating organizations not only ensures that all efforts remain aligned, it also enables the participants to hold each other accountable and learn from each other's successes and failures. (p. 40)

Social partnerships face the challenge of measuring change across multiple entities (Feinberg, Riggs, & Greenberg, 2005), and to date there has been a lack of applied research (Billett et al., 2007) and relatively few rigorous evaluations of social partnerships (Henig et al., 2015; Kubisch et al., 2010). Henig et al. (2015) stated:

> The body of independent literature that takes a critically reflective and analytical approach to these initiatives in education is limited in number and scope, focusing narrowly on a single effect like housing price increases following school improvement or single case studies with some depth of analysis. (p. 29)

They noted, as have others (see, e.g., Ebrahim & Rangan, 2014), that much of the research that is available comes from proponents of social partnerships, such as foundations, consulting firms, and projects themselves. Systematic studies of social

partnerships are difficult because of their complexity (Henig et al., 2015; Kubisch et al., 2010). Part of the challenge, according to Saegert (2006), is that social partnerships often lack clear definitions of concepts and expected outcomes.

The ability to quantify social partnership work is an important part of this challenge (Provan et al., 2005). In Kubisch et al.'s (2010) review of CCIs, they stated, "Virtually all of the efforts reviewed here proudly point to accomplishments on the community building front," continuing, "While evidence of these increases in capacity and connections is hard to quantify, the qualitative evidence, the anecdotes and stories, and the conviction expressed by those who are engaged in the work are powerful" (p. 28). Networks, such as social partnerships, are hard to assess and yet are important given new organizational and partnership structures (Cross, Borgatti, & Parker, 2002).

Issues of power. Issues of power also have been noted as challenges in social partnership work. According to Henig et al. (2015), accounts of social partnerships "say too little about political conflict, the dynamics of negotiation that were entailed in establishing the collaborations, the delicacies of race, and the details of funding" (p. 56). Gray and Purdy (2014) described how power can impact the shared visioning process:

> Differences in power among the potential partners can also fuel conflict within partnerships. These differences may lead them to hold different expectations about the goals of the partnerships and how the process of collaboration will unfold. Thus, although parties may all be concerned about the problem, their vantage points and expectations about what the collaboration will accomplish and why may differ substantially. (p. 213)

As Gray and Purdy (2014) illustrated, joining together is not apolitical. Kania and Kramer (2011) argued that social partnership members need several years of regular interaction "to build up enough experience with each other to recognize and appreciate

the common motivation behind their different efforts" (p. 40). Ansell et al. (2009) used social network analysis and key informant interviews with 47 district administrators, school leaders, political actors, and representatives from local nonprofits and community organizations to study an educational reform coalition in Oakland, California. Their analysis indicated that the partnership faced many challenges, including weak support from school board members, opposition from the teacher's union, and feelings from community groups that parents and local organizers were not being seriously included in the reform process. In Kubisch et al.'s (2010) review of CCIs, they also found that most school-based partnerships had difficulty working with the schools and public education system, potentially due to district control and "intransigent school bureaucracies" (p. 20).

Another aspect of power that is discussed in the literature is the extent to which communities are engaged. Raderstrong and Boyea-Robinson (2016) argued that many social partnerships do not make community involvement a priority, stating:

> Many, if not most initiatives, focus on supporting low-income people, yet leaders involved often come from positions of privilege and power. They (and social sector leaders in general) often rely on their assumptions about what community members need and consequently may be unknowingly disconnected from the challenges and needs faced by low-income residents. (p. 185)

Horsford and Sampson's (2014) research also emphasizes the challenge associated with partnerships in historically underserved and under-resourced communities. "Whether lack of trust or the difficulties associated with bridging diverse networks and contexts across organizations, culture, and space," according to Horsford and Sampso, "the politics of education reform in urban communities demand strategies that address issues of power and inequality" (2014, p. 965).

Social partnerships continue to propagate (Henig et al., 2015, 2016), yet,

according to Waddock (2014), they are "fraught with problems of implementation, problems of complexity, and problems associated with doing things differently" (p. 337). Despite the broad and important challenges mentioned above, the research to date on social partnerships is convincing that networks matter, organizations matter, and people matter.

Networks Matter

The literature makes it clear that networks matter. Ibarra et al. (2005) purported that "when the knowledge base of an industry is complex, expanding, and widely dispersed, the locus of innovation is likely to reside in the interstices between organizations rather than in individual firms" (p. 361). This argument, in line with a network perspective and the underlying premises of social partnerships, emphasizes the importance of network relationships. In Billett et al.'s (2007) study of social partnerships, they emphasized the network aspect of partnership work, stating, "Partnerships work is held to be the interactive and collaborative process of working together to identify, negotiate and articulate shared goals, and to develop processes for realizing and reviewing those goals" (pp. 645–646). As mentioned earlier, one of the main drivers of partnership work is the concept of social capital. Ibarra et al. defined communal social capital as "the benefit that accrues to the collectivity as a result of the positive relations between different groups, organization units, or hierarchical levels" (2005, p. 116).

Nowell (2009) collected survey and social network data from 48 different Midwestern community-based social partnerships, and the results demonstrated the importance of stakeholder relationships for supporting the effectiveness of a social partnership. The author concluded, "As hypothesized, the findings indicated

collaboratives characterized by stronger relationships among stakeholders were more likely to be perceived as more effective at both improving coordination and promoting broader systems changes" (Nowell, 2009, p. 206). Nowell defined the strength of relationship as communication frequency, responsiveness to concerns, trust in follow-through, legitimacy, and shared philosophy. Feinberg et al. (2005) examined the links between community readiness and the social networks among participants in community-based coalitions. They found that measures of network cohesion were positively associated with community readiness.

Two aspects of network interactions are commonly discussed in the literature: organizational communication and collaboration. Research on social partnerships has emphasized the importance of communication among organizations (Chaskin, 2001; Chaskin et al., 1997; Henig et al., 2015; Kania & Kramer, 2011). Kania and Kramer (2011) listed "continuous communication" as one of the main components of their collective impact model. Organizational communication is often described as a means of information sharing. According to Kumaraswamy and Chitale (2012), partnership networks offer many prime opportunities for sharing information and synthesizing it into new forms of knowledge that could not have been generated otherwise. Raderstrong and Boyea-Robinson (2016) also argued that social partnership leaders need feedback loops that integrate the opinions, priorities, and experiences of community members into an initiative's functioning.

In addition to communication, organizational collaboration is also an important aspect of social partnership network interactions. In Henig et al.'s (2015) review of social partnerships focused on education, they found:

> Organizations and agencies typically seek a degree of collaboration that will enable them to obtain resources and achieve goals and benefits, balanced against concern for risks, costs, and conflicts engendered by collaboration. Decisions about whether and how to collaborate may reflect perceived levels of mission congruence and strategic value, expectations for partners' relative intensity of engagement, the magnitude of resources involved, and the involvement of collaboration-minded managers. (p. 37)

According to Kania and Kramer (2011), "The power of collective action comes not from the sheer number of participants or the uniformity of their efforts, but from the coordination of their differentiated activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action" (p. 40). The authors argued that complex issues cannot be addressed by uncoordinated actions from isolated organizations. According to Henig et al. (2015):

> Networks may play an especially important role in cross-sector collaborations for education. . . . Within localities, cross-sector collaborations exhibit a range of collaborative designs, and we expect that while some may be more tightly structured, almost in the form of bureaucratic hierarchies, many others will be loose associations held together tenuously by such elements as shared purpose, shared resources, political opportunities, or even the fear of being left out. How they behave as new forms of networks will be important to explore. (p. 35)

Hill et al. (2014) argued that social partnerships are strengthened "when entities engaging in collective impact projects can effectively locate, document, track, and assess when, where, and how collaborative relationships were initiated and sustained" (p. 129). The authors continued, "Indeed, if collective impact is a body of work, collaboration is at the heart of that body; without collaboration, the collective impact body cannot live" (Hill et al., 2014, p. 129).

Evans et al. (2014) shared the results of their social network analysis with staff from the lead organization of the social partnership under study. The results led the

partnership staff to intentionally engage key organizations in the network and focus efforts on supporting existing initiatives within the hub organizations as a means to connect with organizations on the periphery of the network. Cardazone et al. (2014) studied a coalition in Hawaii called One Strong ‘Ohana, which focused on building knowledge and awareness about child abuse and neglect. The authors used social network analysis to enable the mapping of communication between organizations. Their research highlighted the importance of organizational brokerage for knowledge dissemination. The authors contended that knowing and understanding channels of communication are of great value for facilitating coalition-driven change.

Organizations Matter

By their very nature, social partnerships engage organizations from multiple sectors of society. According to Waddock (2014), “Collapsing boundaries between sectors, functions, and even organizing purposes have created not only a great need for collaboration skills of all sorts, but also an array of new and emerging types of enterprise” (p. 336). Depending on the specific goals of the partnerships, different organizational skill sets will be necessary. For instance, the Boston Promise Initiative has a desired outcome of increased academic achievement for students in the Dudley neighborhood as part of its goal. As such, organizations in different sectors will have different skills that are valuable to working toward this goal. Important sector skills will obviously include schools and district officials. However, less obviously, health organizations and informal learning organizations also offer important sector skills. As such, it is important to take stock of the variety of sector skills present in partner organizations.

The role of a strong lead organization is consistently addressed in the literature (Henig et al., 2015). The lead organization needs to have strong organizational capacity (Evans et al., 2014), sufficient resources (Nowell & Foster-Fishman, 2011), and political influence (Chaskin, 2001). Kania and Kramer (2011) called the lead organization in a social partnership the *backbone organization*. They argued that creating and managing a social partnership requires an organization with specific skills and capacity:

> The backbone organization requires a dedicated staff separate from the participating organizations who can plan, manage, and support the initiative through ongoing facilitation, technology and communication support, and handling the myriad logistical and administrative details needed for the initiative to function smoothly. (p. 40)

In addition, Kania and Kramer (2011) purported that the backbone organization:

> should embody the principles of adaptive leadership: the ability to focus people's attention and create a sense of urgency, the skill to apply pressure to stakeholders without overwhelming them, the competence to frame issues in a way that presents opportunities as well as difficulties, and the strength to mediate conflict among stakeholders. (p. 40)

Gray and Purdy (2014) outlined various tasks that are important for managing social partnerships (see Table 3). These social partnership practices would be a way for a lead organization to facilitate communication and collaboration among partner organizations.

Following from this, it is important to consider organizational capacity in addition to the specific sector skills the organizations possess. Social partnerships often require organizational capacity above and beyond the typical operating capacities of the individual organizations involved. Billett et al. (2007) emphasized the importance of building organizational capacity for partnership work through the development of infrastructure and resources in order to achieve the desired goals. Kubisch et al.'s (2010)

review found that an important attribute of successful partnerships is that they are housed in high-capacity organizations with effective management and financial systems.

Table 3

Tasks for Managing Social Partnerships

Task	Description
Visioning	Recognizing interdependence and need for partnership
Convening	Identifying and enlisting participants
Reflective intervening	Collecting and sharing data to stimulate dialogue
Problem structuring	Developing shared meanings of the issue and the options
Process managing	Creating and managing the interactions between partners
Brokering	Coordinating the exchange among partners
Conflict handling	Working through disagreements
Institutional entrepreneurship	Promoting broad acceptance of the solution

Note. Adapted from "Conflicts in cross-sector partnerships," by B. Gray & J. Purdy, 2014, in M. M. Seitanidi & A. Crane (Eds.), *Social partnerships and responsible business: A research handbook* (pp. 205–225). New York, NY: Routledge.

The need for a strong lead organization with existing relationships within a community is a persistent theme within the social partnership literature. Evans et al. (2014) examined the formation Miami Thrives, an emerging poverty reduction coalition in South Florida. Their research focused specifically on organizational capacity and organizational empowerment among organizations charged to lead social partnerships. Using social network analysis and follow-up interviews, Evans et al. found that interviewees consistently praised the lead organization's history of building community relationships as an important factor. However, many of the interviewees raised concerns about the lead organization's capacity to effectively manage a social partnership, particularly in terms of structural and organizational systems, project management,

limited coalition-building knowledge and expertise, and inability to effectively guide a collective process.

In addition to a strong lead organization, the partnership should have the capacity and skills to develop relationships across multiple stakeholder groups (Nowell & Foster-Fishman, 2011; Kania & Kramer, 2011; Waddock, 2014), including residents and community members (Chaskin, 2001). Evans et al. (2014) noted the importance of a historical record of positive community engagement. Geller et al. (2014) stressed the importance of cultivating trust among and between the stakeholder groups, particularly among residents, institutions, and schools.

Thus, another important aspect of organizations within a social partnership, and within a network perspective, is the ability to connect or "join together" (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014) with other organizations. Social partnerships require relationships, or links, among cross-sector organizations (Henig et al., 2015). According to Kubisch et al. (2010), "When effective alignment occurs among the community, public, and private sectors, it often is because some kind of broker helps marry the parties' interests and counterbalance the inequities in power, information, expertise, and money" (p. 45).

In their analysis of a reform coalition, Ansell et al. (2009) also emphasized the importance of brokerage within a network. They purported, "In order to overcome the conflict that exists between central actors and those on the periphery, reformers must use individuals who are structurally positioned as brokers between reform supporters and reform skeptics to facilitate strategic outreach" (p. 731). The authors argue that strategic brokerage is the critical element in reconciling the agreement of core policy beliefs in an advocacy coalition and the broad stakeholder involvement emphasized by the civic

capacity literature. They concluded, “We argue that certain stakeholders—those in key brokerage positions—ought to be targets for outreach and agenda expansion” (Ansell et al., 2009, p. 737).

People Matter

Networks and organizations would not matter without people. Social partnerships create a context where individuals from different organizations, across sectors, and with diverse backgrounds are expected to work collectively. This area, however, has not received as much attention in the social partnership literature. The research that has been published has focused on types of relationships among individuals in the partnerships. According to Henig et al. (2015), “Collaborative efforts try to build relationships of social capital, mutual trust, and reciprocity. These are like machine oils for collaboration” (p. 57). Billett et al. (2007) agreed that mutual respect must be exercised between partners in order to build and maintain relationships. Further, the authors highlighted the importance of trust in the development and maintenance of the partnership. “The process of trust-building is unlikely ever to be complete or without threat to its erosion,” according to Billett et al. (2007, p. 646). “It is continually being enacted, negotiated and remade throughout the life of the partnership, albeit in different ways and by different degrees in the changing circumstances of, and goals for, these partnerships” (Billett et al., 2007, p. 646).

“Although networks have been thoroughly studied as conduits of information and resources,” according to Ibarra et al. (2005), “we still know little about the role they play in creating and shaping identities” (p. 362). These authors reported that social networks socialize members, and, intentionally or not, convey normative expectations about roles.

"We take as given, therefore, that social identity emerges through network processes: The people around us are active players in the co-creation of who we are at work" (Ibarra et al., 2005, p. 363). Thus, learning a new line of work, such as joining a social partnership, is a social learning process in which people become participants in the practices of a social community. According to Henig et al. (2015):

> If the participants genuinely come to identify with the collaborative effort they may shift or redefine loyalties and alter their own missions in ways that make them more likely to align. This kind of transformational change is the holy grail of collaboration, but it is very rare, especially in heterogenous and—important to remember—open and dynamic systems where new actors enter, former leaders burn out or move to other things, so that relationships must be continually refreshed. (p. 57)

Conclusion

The study of social partnerships has occurred in different academic disciplines, often without a shared set of core ideas, concepts, or foundational work. As this literature review has demonstrated, social partnerships have emerged in many contexts, and these different contexts give rise to distinct definitions, characteristics, and empirical approaches. In the first section of this chapter, I described how social partnerships have been defined and operationalized in the literature, starting broad and then narrowing the scope to Promise Neighborhoods. I answered questions of *what*, and defined social partnerships as involving: (a) the joining together of organizations (b) across sectors (c) to address a social problem (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014). The Promise Neighborhoods program is a specific type of social partnership that has strong roots in comprehensive community initiatives and often is defined in terms of collective impact. Promise Neighborhoods have received significant funding from the Department of Education and

are predicated on the assumption that cross-sector partnerships with an aligned vision will increase positive educational and community outcomes. Yet to date, there have been few academic articles published about Promise Neighborhoods, a gap that this research study is intended to partially fill.

In the second section of this chapter, I described the complexities of social partnerships that have been identified in the literature, answering the questions of *why* and *how*. Social partnerships face challenges, including the difficulty of creating a shared vision among diverse stakeholders, the potential lack of organizational capacity to support such large and complex initiatives, and the limitations of engaging in work within traditional power structures. Research shows, however, that networks, organizations, and people matter for social partnerships to be successful. My research study, detailed further in the next chapter, is rooted in this multifaceted body of literature.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter describes the research methodologies I employed to study a social partnership for educational and community change. I conducted a two-phased, mixed methods study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2006) of one initiative to explore the structures and processes of implementing a social partnership. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the social network structures of the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of interorganizational communication and collaboration?
    (a) What do these networks suggest in terms of network connectivity?
    (b) What do these networks suggest in terms of network influence?
2. How might these social network structures impact efforts at educational and community change?
3. What network processes surface as important for the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of impacting efforts at educational and community change?

With these questions in mind, this chapter is broken into four main sections. In the first section I will discuss in detail the research setting in which this study took place. The second section focuses on my own reflections as a researcher embarking on this project. I will address how my personal experiences may come to bear on this project. The third section provides in-depth explanations and examples of my study design.

Research Setting

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative is the lead organization for the Boston Promise Initiative. DSNI was awarded a Promise Neighborhoods planning grant in 2010. This grant, which consisted of $500,000 for 1 year, was intended to provide financial

capacity to convene partners and prepare an implementation grant application. DSNI was awarded an implementation grant in 2012. The implementation grant from the Department of Education consisted of $1,485,000 in funding for the first year with an expected total grant reaching nearly $6,000,000. Central to BPI's implementation grant application was creating a partnership network among nonprofit service providers, educational institutions, government agencies, and local businesses to build and strengthen a cradle-to-career pipeline for children in the neighborhood. At the time of the current research study, BPI had a formal partner network of 36 organizations, including 6 schools, 15 educational service organizations, 12 social and human service organizations, and 3 health and wellness organizations (see Table 4).

DSNI is no novice in working for educational and community change. In their book *Streets of Hope: The Fall and Rise of an Urban Neighborhood*, Medoff and Sklar (1994) document the history of the Dudley neighborhood of Boston:

> Beginning in the 1950's, disinvestment, abandonment and arson turned Dudley homes, yards and businesses into wasteland. By 1981, one-third of Dudley's land lay vacant. It became a dumping ground for trash from around the city and state. The dumping wasn't legal, but the violators came and went without fear of the law, blighting the neighborhood with toxic chemicals, auto carcasses, old refrigerators, rotten meat and other refuse. Adding insult to injury, Dudley became an illegal dumping ground for debris from housing and other construction elsewhere around Boston. For years, Dudley has looked as if an earthquake had struck, leveling whole sections. Streets crisscross blocks of vacant lots where homes and shops used to be. . . . The earthquake that hit Dudley was neither natural nor sudden. Instead, in a pattern repeated nationally, a thriving urban community was trashed and burned. It was redlined by banks, government

Table 4

BPI Partner Organizations

Sector	Organizations
Social and human services *n* = 12 (33%)	Boston Housing Authority Boston Private Industry Council Children's Services of Roxbury City of Boston Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative Family Independence Initiative Family Nurturing Center First Teacher Jobs for the Future Project Hope Union Capital Boston Vital Village
Educational services *n* = 15 (42%)	Boston Children's Museum Boston College Lynch School of Education Boston Opportunity Agenda Boston Public Schools (district office) Boston Plan for Excellence (BPE) Citizen Schools Countdown to Kindergarten Dudley Promise Corps Generations, Inc. Latino STEM Alliance Nurtury Roxbury Massachusetts Advanced Post-Secondary Pathways (RoxMAPP) The Achievement Gap Initiative at Harvard University Thrive in Five X-Cel Education
Schools *n* = 6 (17%)	Dearborn 6-12 STEM Academy Dudley Street Neighborhood Charter School Jeremiah Burke High School Lilla G. Frederick Pilot School Martin Luther King Jr. K-8 School Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School
Health and wellness *n* =3 (8%)	Boston Public Health Commission The Food Project Uphams Corner Health Center

Note. N = 36. The names of the partner organizations are not identified in the research analyses to protect confidentiality.

> mortgage programs and insurance companies in a self-fulfilling prophecy of White-flight, devaluation and decline. The distance between downtown Boston and downtrodden Dudley could not be measured by the less than two miles between them. One area reflected privilege and reinvestment, the other prejudice and disinvestment. (pp. 2–3)

More than 30 years ago, Dudley residents came together to combat the policies and practices that were negatively affecting their community. What began as informal organizing formalized into the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, which was charged with catalyzing comprehensive neighborhood revitalization through continued community organizing and action. DSNI's mission became to "empower Dudley residents to organize, plan for, create, and control a vibrant, diverse, and high-quality neighborhood in collaboration with community partners" (DSNI, 2012, p. 16).

Yet Dudley remains one of the most distressed areas of Boston. In 2009, the Barr Foundation supported the development of a "distress index" to enable comparisons of data across Boston. Jennings (2012) created the index and analyzed the data to create a representation of where distress is most severe in the city. The results show Boston census tracts by their distress score based on multiple variables, with the Dudley neighborhood ranking "very high" in terms of neighborhood distress.

Tables 5 and 6 show community- and academic-based indicators for the Dudley neighborhood at the time DSNI applied for the Promise Neighborhoods implementation grant in 2012. Although I do not include an analysis of these indicators in my research, I have included the list of indicators here for two reasons. First, these indicators were included in the application that DSNI submitted to the Department of Education when applying for the Promise Neighborhoods grants, indicating metrics the organization

hoped to address through the initiative. Second, in thinking about the generalizability of the research findings, I think it is important to consider indicators such as these, as they are often symptoms of larger, structural issues.

Table 5 illustrates key community-based indicators in the Dudley neighborhood in relation to Boston and the state of Massachusetts. The Dudley neighborhood is disproportionately impacted in terms of asthma rates, food insecurity, student mobility rates, and poverty rates. Table 6 shows the percentage of students scoring proficient or advanced on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) for the five schools in the Dudley neighborhood in relation to state averages. These tables make visible what Ladson-Billings (2006) called "education debt," in which the structures and resources necessary to support children, youth, and families have not been provided to schools and communities in high-poverty areas. BPI is one example of a social partnership aimed at creating educational and community change by providing the necessary supports and resources for children, youth, and families to succeed. The community- and academic-based indicators of need presented in Tables 5 and 6 will eventually be used by BPI as indicators of impact for a formal evaluation.

Table 5

Community-Based Indicators of Need

Indicator	Dudley	Boston	State
Asthma rate	17%	10%	10%
Food insecurity rate	25%	20%	7%
Student mobility rate	42%	24%	20%
Poverty rate	30%	15%	11%

Note. Data for 2011–2012. Data from "Boston Promise Initiative Narrative" Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, 2012. Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/2012/appdudleystreet.pdf

Table 6

Percentage of Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced: School (State Average)

Topic	School 1	School 2	School 3	School 4	School 5
ELA	36 (57)	40 (57)	26 (74)	37 (74)	50 (89)
Math	39 (47)	26 (47)	25 (56)	27 (56)	50 (80)

Note. Data for 2011–2012. The sixth school in the BPI partnership was started after the Promise Neighborhoods grant was awarded and as such is not represented in this table. Data from Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Retrieved from http://www.doe.mass.edu/

The Promise Neighborhoods grant program offered an opportunity for DSNI to build on its years of work in the community. According to DSNI's (2012) proposal to the Department of Education for the Promise Neighborhoods implementation grant:

> What has been missing is the opportunity to bring a comprehensive set of partners to focus with the community and families in a geographic area with the schools at the table and center the programming on the children and their academic, social and emotional wellbeing and success. Many organizations can run excellent programs and services, schools may individually succeed, but this is an opportunity to "raise all boats" with a comprehensive, strategic process that approaches the issues systematically and designs collaborative solutions for medium and high need children from birth to 24 years. (p. 16)

At the time this research study began, BPI was in its third year of implementation after being awarded the implementation grant in 2012.

Researcher Reflexivity

Reflexivity is the process of acknowledging the presence of the researcher's preconceptions, values, and theoretical orientations (Maxwell, 1992). For this research project, it is important to note that in 2011 I spent eight months working for DSNI as a researcher during the planning period for the Promise Neighborhoods grant. During this

time, I supported the writing of the initial grant application, primarily through literature reviews and qualitative analyses of community focus groups. Beyond work tasks, I came to empathize with those involved, including DSNI staff, partner organizations, and community members. Furthermore, I wanted them to succeed. I was invested in their efforts and dedicated to their cause.

In many ways, this experience may preclude me from being an objective observer. However, as my research questions explore the process of creating and managing a network of partner organizations, I believe that my experience with DSNI and the BPI process will allow me to explore these questions fully, or at least distinctively. I believe that my prior work experience with DSNI may benefit the research in the following ways.

First and foremost, my experience with DSNI allowed me access that I may not have otherwise had. Due to my history at DSNI and my relationships with the staff members, I had already become, as Glesne (2015) put it, a "trusted person." According to Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2000), trust is rooted in (a) benevolence, (b) reliability, (c) competence, and (d) honesty. Although researcher trust was not under study in this project, my experience as an employee of DSNI allowed me opportunities to display the characteristics that define trust and build a professional network. This status allowed me to gain access to the research site and engage with key people as participants in the research project that I otherwise may not have had.

Second, my ability to collaborate with the research participants was essential to establishing rapport, building trust, and maintaining positive working relationships with the members of BPI throughout the research project. At multiple points in the research I collaborated with DSNI on the design of the research elements and supported

organizational sense making of the data. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, Coburn et al. (2013) described this aspect of research partnerships as *mutualism*, or "sustained interaction that benefits both researchers and practitioners" (p. 3). As a consequence, I hope this research is meaningful to the research participants and that my engagement in the research process itself will add meaning to the results I present.

Finally, throughout the research process, I took an ongoing reflective stance to identify and examine how my own subjectivity was potentially influencing data collection and analysis. This included maintaining an ongoing, critical consideration of my own experiences, reactions, and views throughout the processes of data collection, data analysis, and writing process. These reflections were recorded in memos and annotations during the process of data collection and analysis. I revisited these memos and annotations at multiple points to critically consider the potential bias I might be bringing to the research.

Study Design

This study used a two-phased, mixed methods design to answer the research questions. Within mixed methods studies, the researcher collects and analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data. The study design generally follows the explanatory design put forth by Creswell and Plano Clark (2006), where an initial quantitative phase is followed by a second, qualitative phase. The research design for this study included two distinct but mutually informing phases: (a) a quantitatively oriented social network analysis and (b) qualitative interviews (see Appendix A for the research design map). The second, qualitative phase aimed to elicit potential explanations for findings from the initial quantitative phase, glean complimentary insights to the quantitative data, and elicit

concepts that were not captured or explored in the quantitative phase (See Table 7 for research questions aligned to design phases).

In mixed method research, the researcher collects and analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data within a single study and combines or integrates the data in some manner (Creswell, 2011). I employed a mixed methods study design for three main reasons. First, the choice of research methods was heavily influenced by my theoretical orientation. Central to social network theory is the importance of both structure and process. Phase 1 of this research design attended more to the structural aspect of the research topic, that is, explaining in a detailed matter what the networks of communication and collaboration are within BPI. Phase 2 of the research attended more to the process of examining how and why certain outcomes emerged. Both, I argue, are important for fully answering my research questions and are rooted in my theoretical framework of social network analysis.

Table 7

Research Questions and Research Design Phases

Research question	Phase 1: SNA	Phase 2: Interviews
1. What are the social network structures of BPI in terms of interorganizational communication and collaboration?	X	
(a) What do these networks suggest in terms of network connectivity?	X	
(b) What do these networks suggest in terms of network influence?	X	
2. How might these social network structures impact efforts at educational and community change?	X	X
3. What network processes surface as important for the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of impacting efforts at educational and community change?		X

Second, this research design is consistent with previous research on social partnerships, though novel in its use of social network analysis (SNA). To my knowledge, there are only a few studies that have used social network analysis to understand the existing interorganizational relationships in social partnerships, yet the importance of interorganizational relationships to social partnerships lends support to the use of research methods such as SNA (Cardazone et al., 2014; Cross et al., 2012; Provan et al., 2005). Of the studies that do exist, for example, Ansell et al. (2009) used SNA to map school reform initiatives in Oakland, Cardazone et al. (2014) used SNA to examine a statewide coalition to prevent child abuse, and Evans et al. (2014) used SNA to study the early workings of a poverty reduction coalition.

Including qualitative interviews as the second phase of this research design is an intentional decision. Although social network analysis can be a useful tool for illustrating and quantifying the connections and relationships among actors, reflecting the structure of the network, it is less effective at illustrating the underlying processes within the network that may impact outcomes (Provan et al., 2005). Follow-up interviews are one way to explore network processes. In their research on a poverty reduction coalition, for instance, Evans et al. (2014) used follow-up interviews as a sensemaking activity with coalition participants. They noticed, however, that when viewed separately, the SNA and interview results were somewhat discordant:

> Whereas SNA provided a picture of the network that indicated [the organization] was well suited to take on the role of lead organization, the qualitative analysis helped reveal a number of important intraorganizational factors that are hindering their ability to do so effectively. (Evans et al., 2014, p. 367)

Other researchers who have employed SNA as a research methodology have also chosen to use follow-up interviews with key informants (see, e.g., Daly & Finnigan, 2010). Including interviews with key informants as a qualitative phase of my research design also increases the validity of the findings, which I discuss further below. Finally, in addition to its use as a research tool, social network analysis also can be an effective tool for promoting collaboration and knowledge sharing with a group or network by reflecting on the relationships within the network (Cross et al., 2012).

Phase 1: Social Network Analysis

Data Collection. In order to collect social network data, an online survey instrument was developed (attached as Appendix C). The survey was informed by the theoretical and conceptual frameworks that drove this study and insights from the relevant literature. Furthermore, it was created in partnership with DSNI. The survey was sent to individuals in 36 formal partner organizations from late 2015 to early 2016. The director of BPI created the participant list based on formal existing organizational partnerships as well as by identifying one or more representatives from each organization. As director of BPI, this individual had intimate knowledge of the initiative and oversight on initiative participation. Partner organization representatives were chosen based on their involvement in BPI; for instance, individuals that participated in work groups or received funding from BPI. This list was cross-checked with one other DSNI employee to ensure that a complete participant list had been generated. Such a strategy, using organizational representatives as respondents for social network analysis at the organizational level, has been substantiated in the literature (Ansell et al., 2009; Feinberg et al., 2005; Evans et al., 2014; Nowell, 2009).

To examine the social structure of the partner network, the second part of the survey included two social network analysis questions. The first question focused on interorganizational communication and read: "With whom, if anyone, has your organization communicated about issues broadly related to the Boston Promise Initiative?" The second focused on interorganizational collaboration and read: "With whom, if anyone, has your organization worked to create some sort of deliverable, for instance, a grant application, information session, event, project, etc.?" For each question, the survey included a roster of all formal partners in the initiative. Respondents could select as many or as few organizations from the roster as they deemed appropriate.

In addition to the social network analysis questions, the partner survey included multiple questions and scales that were added because they were either of interest to the researcher and/or they were of interest to DSNI. One section of the survey focused on organizational background information. Other sections of the survey included questions that were intended to provide feedback to BPI. For instance, I was interested in learning about the organization, respondents' role within the organization, how many years they had been with the organization, and their personal involvement with BPI. Further, I inquired as to whether they were involved in any BPI working groups or if their organization has received funding through BPI. For example, a few questions asked: "How well do you feel like you understand the goals of BPI?" and "How effective do you think BPI is at working towards its goals?" This section also included questions to gauge participants' perspectives on how well BPI had been performing in the collective impact conditions proposed by Kania and Kramer (2011) and discussed in Chapter 2. Another section of the survey examined relational characteristic scales for identification,

commitment, and deep-level diversity. Although these data were collected, I did not use these data in my analysis for the purposes of this dissertation. The survey concluded with questions related to participant demographics, including neighborhood residency, level of education, and gender and racial identification.

Sample. As mentioned above, the survey was sent to representatives of the organizations identified by the director of BPI. In total, the survey was sent to 50 individuals in 36 organizations. Of these, 33 individuals responded from a total of 27 organizations (see Table 8). Thus, the overall individual response rate was 66% (33 out of 50) and the response rate by organization was 75% (27 out of 36). Of the total number of respondents, 14 were from social and human services organizations, 14 were from educational services organizations, 3 were from schools, and 2 were from health and wellness organizations. In terms of organizational role, 6 respondents were executive directors, 11 were directors, 3 were school administrators, 2 were board members, 1 was a public official, and 10 were in administrative or managerial roles.

Overall, respondents had extensive experience within BPI, which had been operating for almost 3 years at the time of the survey. A full third (33%) of respondents had worked with BPI for longer than 2 years, and an additional 46% had worked with BPI for 1–2 years. Of the remaining respondents, 15% had worked with BPI for 6 months to 1 year, and 6% had worked with BPI for 1–6 months. None of the respondents had worked with BPI for less than one month.

Table 8

Demographic Information of Survey Respondents

Measure	Items	Frequency	%
Sector	Social and human services	14	42
	Educational services	14	42
	Schools	3	9
	Health and wellness services	2	6
Organizational role	Executive director	6	18
	Director	11	33
	School administrator	3	9
	Board member	2	6
	Public official	1	3
	Administrative/managerial role	10	30
Experience with BPI	Less than 1 month	0	0
	1–6 months	2	6
	6 months to 1 year	5	15
	1 to 2 years	15	45
	Longer than 2 years	11	33
Identified race	Asian	2	6
	Black or African American	10	30
	White	20	61
	Other	1	3
Identified gender	Female	26	79
	Male	7	21

Note. $N = 33$.

Because one of the primary goals of BPI is to impact educational change, I would have preferred a higher response rate among the schools in the initiative. I only received a 50% response rate from schools, which could impact the findings of this research study. I also find it interesting that nearly 80% of the respondents were female. I cannot

determine, though, if there is a difference in response rates from women and men or if the full list of organizational representatives provided to me had a similar proportion of women and men. I considered the potential impacts of the survey sample as I analyzed the data.

Data Analysis. Social network analysis was used to measure and visualize the patterns of interorganizational communication and collaboration among organizations within BPI. SNA offers a number of quantifiable measures and visualization options to answer my research questions. Social network analysis examines a set of actors, or nodes, and how they are connected to each other through relationships, or ties (see Table 9). In this study, the nodes are partner organizations of the Boston Promise Initiative and the ties represent interorganizational communicative and collaborative relationships. In order for a social network analysis to be run in a reliable manner, 70% or greater participation rate is required (Nowell, 2009). As mentioned above, I achieved a 75% organizational response rate on the partner survey, which allowed me to run this analysis with confidence.

Table 9

Definitions and Examples of Social Network Analysis Terms

Term	Definition
Node	A node is each actor in a network. For the purposes of this research study, each node represents an organization in BPI.
Tie	A tie is a direct connection between two nodes. For this study, a tie represents interorganizational communication or collaboration.
Sociogram	Taken together, the nodes and ties make up a sociogram, or visual image of the network. For this study, sociograms illustrate all partner organizations within BPI and their communication or collaboration ties.

Analyses of the social network data were completed using the social network analysis software UCINET (Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 2002). Visual representation of the network, called sociograms, were generated using the network visualization software Gephi (Bastian, Heymann, & Jacomy, 2009). I took a number of steps to complete the social network analysis and data visualization. As mentioned above, social network data were collected through the partner survey. Two social network questions were asked, one focusing on interorganizational communication and the second focusing on interorganizational collaboration. For each question, respondents were able to select organizations from a roster of all of the partner organizations within BPI. In order to analyze these data, I transformed the survey data output into sociomatrices that were compatible with the social network analysis software programs. Figure 1 shows an example of a small sociomatrix. As shown in Figure 1, organizations are represented by both a column and a row. The boxes that intersect an organization with itself are filled with dashes, representing that a connection with one's self in this network is not possible. Boxes filled with a *1* represent a tie whereas boxes filled with a *0* represent no tie. For instance, Organization A has ties with Organizations B and C but does not have a tie with Organization D. In this sociogram, the ties are undirected and the matrix is symmetrized, meaning that the data in each respective row and column for a given node are the same. In some cases, researchers may be interested in directed ties, in which the rows and columns provide different information. However, this is not relevant to the current study, as the communication and collaboration ties are assumed to be reciprocal.

	A	B	C	D
A	0	1	1	0
B	1	0	1	0
C	1	1	0	1
D	0	0	1	0

Figure 1. Example of a small sociomatrix.

Figure 2 shows an example of a sociogram that could be drawn with the data from Figure 1. In this sociogram, each node is represented by a circle. Each line shows a tie that connects one organization to another. Thus, as within Figure 1 it is clear to see that Organization A has ties with Organizations B and C but does not have a tie with Organization D. Sociograms are visualizations of the data presented in the sociomatrices. For my analysis, I transformed the survey data output into discrete sociomatrices for the communication and collaboration networks. I then used these data to visualize the networks as sociograms.

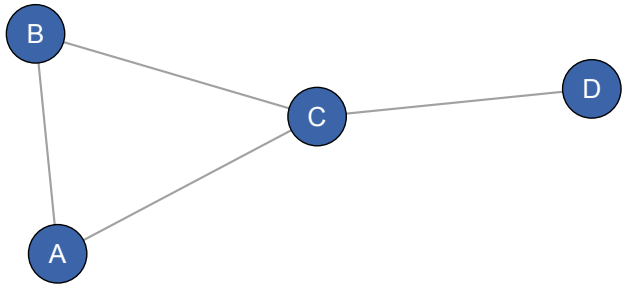


Figure 2. Example of a sociogram drawn from the data in Figure 1.

Missing data. In social network analysis, missing data can increase the likelihood of errors in network variables, particularly for measures such as density and betweenness and eigenvector centrality (which are described fully below; Borgatti, Everett, & Johnson, 2013). For instance, missing data can make networks appear to be less dense

than they are or make certain nodes appear more central than they are in reality. I took a number of steps to reduce the threat of missing data.

First, I chose do to a bounded network in which the number of nodes were predetermined. As mentioned above, I worked with DSNI to create an exhaustive list of partner organizations. I included the roster of all 33 organizations in the survey instrument. This strategy limits missing data because respondents are presented with a roster of all other partner organizations—as opposed to, for instance, open-ended questions (de Lima, 2010). Next, I worked with DSNI to get a high response rate on the survey as another method of limiting the amount of missing data. Although I would have preferred a higher response rate, I received a 75% response rate among partner organizations, above the recommended threshold of 70% (Nowell, 2009).

Third, I chose to make the communication and collaboration ties reciprocal in nature. Unlike directed ties, where the direction of the flow from one node to another is important, undirected ties assume bidirectional flows. Thus, if one organization nominated another, a tie was created whether or not the second organization also nominated the first. In this study, I assumed that communication and collaboration between two organizations was reciprocal in nature. If, for instance, I was interested in examining funding streams between partner organizations, I would not assume reciprocity, as the flow of money is traditionally unidirectional.

Fourth, I ran the analyses in a few different ways to check the robustness of the findings. I ran the analyses after removing all organizations that did not respond to the survey and compared the results to my original analysis. I also ran the analysis with all ties being directional, instead of reciprocal, to see if this affected the findings. In each

case, SNA measures changed slightly; however, neither the results nor the patterns in the data were drastically changed. For instance, after removing nonrespondents from the data set, the order of the organizational scores shifted but there was no change in terms of which organizations tended to be toward the higher end and which tended to be on the lower end (other than, of course, the organizations that were removed).

Finally, I reviewed the missing data with the director of BPI. Reciprocal ties guard against missing ties between a respondent and a nonrespondent. Figure 3 illustrates this point, where blue nodes represent survey respondents and red nodes represent nonrespondents. If Node C responded to the survey and indicated a connection with Nodes A and B, ties were created. Even if Nodes A and B did not respond to the survey, those ties are present. Reciprocity, however, does not guard against missing ties between two nonrespondents. For instance, if neither Node A nor Node B responded to the survey, I would not be able to determine if the lack of a tie between them is due to a lack of relationship or missing data (represented by a dashed line). To guard against this threat, I created small sociomatrices for communication and collaboration of organizations that did not respond to the survey. I then asked the director of BPI to use personal best judgment to determine whether or not there was a communication or collaboration tie between each pair of nonrespondents. The director of BPI was able to identify a few ties that would not have been represented otherwise.

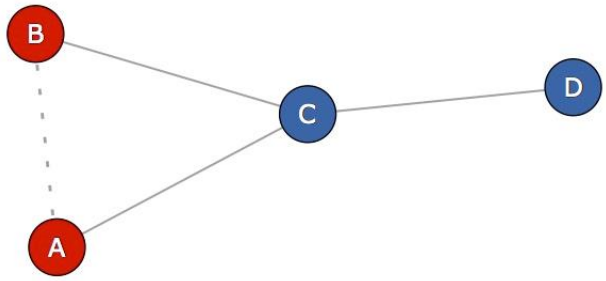


Figure 3. Illustration of missing social network data.

Social network analysis measures. In addition to using the sociomatrices to visualize the data as sociograms, social network analysis offers a suite of measures that quantify networks. Table 10 defines the social network analysis measures I used in this study and Table 11 illustrates and explains these concepts. I will expand on each of these concepts in the sections that follow. For this study, I am using four social network analysis measures: one measure (network density) to examine network connectivity and three measures (degree centrality, eigenvector centrality, and betweenness centrality) to examine network centrality to better understand potential network influence or power.

Table 10

Definitions of Social Network Analysis Measures

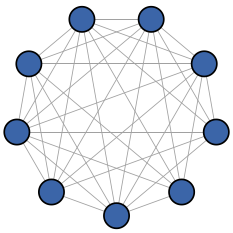
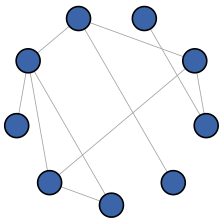
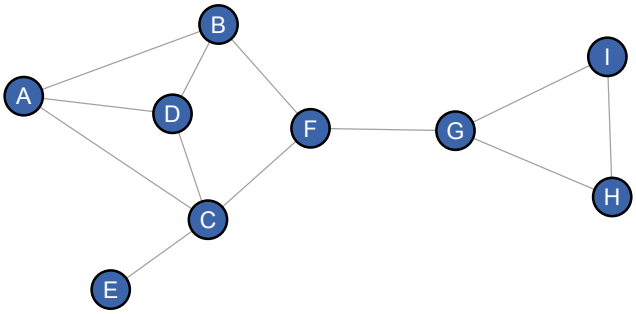
Measure	Definition	Sources
Network connectivity measure		
Network density	The percentage of ties that exist in a network relative to the total number of possible ties available.	Borgatti et al. (2013) Carolan (2014)
Network centrality measures		
Degree centrality	The number of ties of a given type each node has.	Borgatti et al. (2013); Carolan (2014)
Eigenvector centrality	A measure proportional to the sum of centralities of the nodes it is adjacent to.	Borgatti et al. (2013)
Betweenness centrality	A measure of how often a given node falls along the shortest path between two other nodes.	Borgatti et al. (2013); Carolan (2014); Freeman (1979)

Network density is a common measure used in SNA to examine a network as a whole. Network density is the percentage of ties that exist in a network relative to the total number of possible ties (Borgatti et al., 2013). Thus, the range of possible densities for a network is from 1 to 0. If every organization in the network had a tie with every other organization, the density would equal 1. Alternately, if none of the organizations had ties to each other in the network, the density would be 0. Thus, values closer to 1 represent greater density and values closer to 0 indicate less density. In the network connectivity examples in Table 11, the sociogram on the left has a density of 0.917, meaning 91.7% of all possible ties have been made in this network, whereas the sociogram on the right has a network density of 0.278, meaning 27.8% of all possible ties have been made in this network. Density is a network measure that demonstrates the overall connectivity of the network. In the current study, network density is used to describe the overall levels of communication and collaboration among the BPI organizations.

Network density is a common measure used in SNA to examine a network as a whole. Network density is the percentage of ties that exist in a network relative to the total number of possible ties (Borgatti et al., 2013). In an undirected network, such as the one in this network, the total number of possible ties is $n(n-1)/2$, where n is the number of nodes(Borgatti et al., 2013). Thus, the range of possible densities for a network is from 1 to 0. If every organization in the network had a tie with every other organization, the density would equal 1. Alternately, if none of the organizations had ties to each other in the network, the density would be 0. Thus, values closer to 1 represent greater density and values closer to 0 indicate less density.

Table 11

Examples of Social Network Analysis Measures

Measure	Examples
Network connectivity measure	
Network density The sociogram on the left has a higher density of ties at 0.917 than the sociogram on the right, which has a network density of 0.278.	Higher density  Lower density 
Network centrality measures	
Degree centrality Node C has the highest degree centrality with four ties. Node E has the lowest degree centrality with one tie. Eigenvector centrality Even though Nodes F and G each have three ties, Node F has a higher eigenvector centrality because its direct ties themselves have more ties. Betweenness centrality Node F connects the left side of the sociogram with the right, which would not otherwise be connected, thus it has a higher betweenness centrality than, say, Node A.	

Note. The data in these examples are for illustrative use only and do not represent data in this study.

In the network connectivity examples in Table 11, the sociogram on the left has a density of 0.917, meaning 91.7% of all possible ties have been made in this network, whereas the sociogram on the right has a network density of 0.278, meaning 27.8% of all possible ties

have been made in this network. Density is a network measure that demonstrates the overall connectivity of the network. In the current study, network density is used to describe the overall levels of communication and collaboration among the BPI organizations.

I used three measures to examine and describe network centrality: degree centrality, eigenvector centrality, and betweenness centrality (see Tables 10 & 11 above). First, degree centrality is simply the number of ties each node has (Borgatti et al., 2013). As explicated by Borgatti et al. (2013), if d_i is the degree centrality of actor i and x_{ij} is the (i, j) entry of the sociomatrix, then:

$$d_i = \sum_j xij$$

For instance, in the example provided in Table 11, Node C has the highest degree centrality with four ties and Node E has the lowest degree centrality with one tie. Nodes with high degree centrality are typically highly visible and tend to be viewed as important within a network (Borgatti et al., 2013). In the current study, degree centrality was used to examine and describe the number of communication and collaboration ties each organization has within the BPI network.

Second, a node's eigenvector centrality is proportional to the sum of centralities of the nodes it is adjacent to (Borgatti et al., 2013). A node with high eigenvector centrality is connected to nodes that are themselves well-connected. Eigenvector centrality is a variation of degree centrality in which one counts the number of nodes adjacent to a given node and weights each adjacent node by its centrality, where e is the eigenvector centrality score and λ (lambda) is a proportionality constant called the eigenvalue (Borgatti et al., 2013):

$$e_i = \lambda \sum_j x_{ij} e_j$$

For instance, in the example provided in Table 11, even though Nodes F and G each have three ties, Node F has a higher eigenvector centrality because its direct ties themselves have more ties. In the current study, eigenvector centrality was used to examine and describe how well-connected each organization is in terms of the BPI communication and collaboration networks.

Third, betweenness centrality is a measure of how often a given node falls along the shortest path between two other nodes. Betweenness centrality is calculated for each node by computing the proportion of all of the shortest paths between two nodes that pass through the focal node (Borgatti et al., 2013). These proportions are summed across all pairs and the result is a single value for each node in the network. The formula for the betweenness centrality of node j is:

$$b_j = \sum_{i<k} \frac{g_{ijk}}{g_{ik}}$$

where g_{ijk} is the number of paths connecting i and k through j, and g_{ik} is the total number of paths connecting i and k (Borgatti et al., 2013, p. 174). For instance, in the example provided in Table 11, to find the betweenness centrality of Node F, we would calculate all possible paths from two other nodes; for instance, Nodes A and G. From this, we would find the shortest path (or multiple shortest paths) between Nodes A and G and determine how often Node F falls along these paths. In this case, the shortest path between A and G is three and there are two different paths of three: A-B-F-G and A-C-F-G. Node F falls along both shortest paths from Nodes A to G. We can visually tell that Node F connects the left side of the sociogram with the right, which would not otherwise

be connected. Node F has high betweenness centrality because it will often fall along the shortest paths between other nodes in the network. In the current study, betweenness centrality was used to examine and describe which organizations might possess influence or power in the network by the nature of their location in the network.

I used the social network analysis software program UCINET (Borgatti et al., 2002) to calculate the network connectivity measure (network density) and network centrality measures (degree, eigenvector, and betweenness centrality). I then used the network visualization software Gephi (Bastian et al., 2009) to visualize the data. Gephi provides a number of network visualization options that I use to examine and discuss the BPI network in Chapter 4. Both UCINET and Gephi have become standard social network analysis software programs and have widespread use for similar analyses across multiple fields.

In summary, data analysis for Phase 1 (social network analysis) included (a) transforming survey data output into distinct sociomatrices of interorganizational communication and collaboration, (b) identifying and addressing missing data, (c) quantifying the social network measures using the social network analysis software UCINET (Borgatti et al., 2002), and (d) visualizing the sociomatrices into sociograms using the network visualization software Gephi (Bastian et al., 2009). Data analysis was completed before Phase 2 of the research process began, as it was designed to inform the qualitative phase of the research.

Phase 2: Qualitative Interviews

Data Collection. My conceptual and theoretical frameworks guided the initial interview protocol design. The interview protocol was then revised based on insights

derived from Phase 1 of the research. Eleven semi-structured interviews, lasting approximately one hour in length, were completed in late 2016. The interview protocol is attached as Appendix C.

The first section of the interview focused on background information of the participant. For instance, I asked interviewees to discuss their organization, their role within the organization, and their experiences with BPI. The next section of the interview focused on their perceptions of the initiative and relational characteristics. First, I asked the interviewees general questions about BPI; for instance, "What do you see as the primary goals of the Boston Promise Initiative?," "What do you see as the strengths of BPI?," and "What do you see as the limitations of BPI?" Next, I focused on the relational characteristics of commitment and identification. For example, for commitment I asked, "Can you describe your commitment level to the Boston Promise Initiative?" and "Do you feel an emotional connection to BPI at all?" For identification I asked questions such as, "Are there aspects of BPI that you really identify with?"

The final section of the interview utilized the BPI sociograms generated from Phase 1 of the research to facilitate the discussion important to my second and third research questions. As mentioned above, I completed the social network analysis before the interviews. In preparation for the interviews, I created two sociograms, one focused on communication and one on collaboration. Each sociogram displayed the social network analysis results (described fully in Chapter 4). Although in this dissertation I have removed organizational names from the sociograms to protect confidentiality, I was able to include all of the organizational names for the interviewees to review and discuss. During the interviews, I prompted interviewees to discuss the images they were seeing,

including where their organization is located relative to others, the structure of the network, the location of other organizations, the accuracy of the images relative to their perceptions, and if they noticed anything else of interest in the networks.

Sample. Of the 33 survey respondents, 27 marked that they were willing to participate in a follow-up interview, and I invited all 27 individuals to participate in a follow-up interview. Of those invited, I interviewed 10 individuals. I also interviewed one additional employee of DSNI who had not taken the partner survey, bringing my total number of interviews to 11. I chose to include this additional interviewee based on their knowledge of the schools in the initiative, as this was one aspect I wanted to explore more based on the results of the SNA. Table 12 describes the interview respondents' demographic information.

There are a number of things to note about the interview sample relative to the survey sample (see Table 8). First, social and human service organizations are overrepresented in the sample, with six interviewees, while two were from educational service organizations, one was from a health and wellness organization, and one was from a school. Relative to the survey sample, I received more interview participation at the executive director level and less participation from those in administrative/managerial roles. Experience with BPI, identified race, and identified gender were fairly consistent between the two samples.

Table 12

Demographic Information of Interview Respondents

Measure	Items	Frequency	%
Sector	Social and human services	6	60
	Educational services	2	20
	Schools	1	10
	Health and wellness services	1	10
Organizational role	Executive director	3	30
	Director	3	30
	School administrator	1	10
	Board member	1	10
	Public official	1	10
	Administrative/managerial role	1	10
Experience with BPI	Less than 1 month	0	0
	1–6 months	0	0
	6 months to 1 year	2	20
	1 to 2 years	4	40
	Longer than 2 years	4	40
Identified race	Asian	1	10
	Black or African American	3	30
	White	6	60
	Other	0	0
Identified gender	Female	7	70
	Male	3	30

Note. Only 10 interviewees are described in this table. The additional interviewee did not take the partner survey and thus I do not have demographic data for that individual.

Data Analysis. All interviews were recorded (with explicit permission) and transcribed. Data analysis of the interview transcripts consisted of a mixed inductive and deductive approach, meaning I approached the analysis with predetermined concepts I was exploring and also allowed emergent themes to surface. This approach allowed the

analysis to reflect the potentially unique views of the interview participants while also allowing for and building upon existing theory.

I read each transcript at least three times. For the first reading, I employed an iterative open-coding process (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) in which I annotated the transcripts with words and short phrases that characterized sections of the data. Annotations were then organized into categories and given broad headings and definitions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Inductive code generation facilitated the identification of topics and themes that were salient in the data and may not have been captured by deductive coding alone. In many cases the annotations fell into categories that aligned with planned deductive codes. For instance, there were many references to challenges that fit within the "constraints" code. In other cases, new codes were developed to accommodate the data. For instance, there were a number of references to DSNI's organizational identity that did not fit neatly into predetermined codes. Table 13 provides an example of this inductive code generation process. The final qualitative codebook is attached as Appendix E.

For the second reading of the transcripts, I coded each one according to the final codebook using the electronic coding software NVivo. As I coded the transcripts, I kept a memo of emerging reflections about the data, potential findings, and personal reactions, which I discuss further below. Finally, I reread the transcripts a third and final time after I wrote the findings sections. This was to ensure consistency between the findings and the original transcript data as well as to identify disconfirming evidence that may not have been captured by the coding process.

Table 13

Example of Inductive Code Generation

Code	Definition	Examples of initial transcript annotations
Organizational identity	References to DSNI's organizational identity, including DSNI's history, mission, vision, credibility, and other comments about how this may or may not have shifted with the design and implementation of the Boston Promise Initiative.	What does DSNI want to be at this point? BPI as DSNI's identity DSNI and BPI as inseparable: Is that a good thing or a bad thing? (or neutral?) DSNI as BPI DSNI/BPI Organizational identity Shift in roles for DSNI (identity) BPI shifting DSNI to be more education focused Mission alignment between DSNI and BPI Challenge of organizational capacity as a grant maker Being a "funder" and building the infrastructure for this role DSNI's identity as a grant maker

Note. There were a total of 507 initial transcript annotations. Through an iterative process, these were reduced and categorized into predetermined deductive codes or developed into new codes. The final codebook is attached as Appendix E.

Throughout the qualitative data analysis, I kept analytical memos (Charmaz, 2006) to capture my emerging thoughts and reflections. I used this memo-creating process to support data analysis and meaning making from the data as I formulated the findings. The memo-creating process prompted me to address the question, "What is actually happening in the data?" (Glaser, 1978, p. 57) throughout the analysis process, not just at the end. Further, it allowed me to reflect on the memos to better understand if my own bias as a researcher was impacting how I was viewing the data, by providing me with an ongoing sense of how I was interpreting these varied data sources.

Validity and Reliability

Maintaining rigorous standards in research design, data collection, sampling, and data analysis are imperative for reaching quality conclusions. Although the procedures described above were chosen intentionally to ensure high-quality research, it is important to explicitly address issues of validity and reliability. Validity refers to how trustworthy the research conclusions are in terms of their alignment with the evidence (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002). I took a number of steps to reduce threats to validity and reliability in this research.

First, using multiple data sources and data methods allowed me to triangulate data to form more robust findings (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Patton (2002) advocated for the use of triangulation, writing: "Triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods. This can mean using several kinds of methods or data, including using both quantitative and qualitative approaches" (p. 247). Utilizing and integrating quantitative and qualitative methodologies in an intentional way strengthens the study.

Second, social network analysis requires unique procedures to minimize threats to validity in the design, collection, and analysis of network data. As I mentioned above, I took multiple steps to reduce the threat of missing data, including using a bounded network, supplying a roster during data collection, using reciprocal ties, and filling in missing data with an informed respondent.

Third, I was intentionally explicit about my own reflexivity as a researcher. According to Creswell and Miller (2000), researcher reflexivity is "a process whereby researchers report on personal beliefs, values, and biases that shape their inquiry" (p.

127). I addressed this issue at the beginning of this chapter, outlining how I believe my personal perspective and experience as a researcher may have impacted this study.

Fourth, I intentionally built member checking and collaboration into the research design. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described member checking as "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (p. 314). Member checking involves taking data and interpretations back to a study's participants so that they can confirm or challenge the credibility of the researcher's interpretation (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Member checking was a particularly important step for this study because prior research (Evans et al., 2014) highlighted the potential for discordant findings when combining social network analysis and interview data. By presenting the social network analysis data to the interview participants, I was able to gain insight into whether or not the findings were consistent with their perceptions.

Fifth, when I present the findings from my qualitative analysis of the interview transcripts in Chapter 4, I intentionally include detailed quotations from interviewees that correspond to the findings. Including detailed accounts from participants to support findings and interpretations has been promoted as a way for qualitative researchers to increase the validity of the research findings (Patton, 2002).

Sixth, as a quality check on the findings, I reanalyzed the data to look for disconfirming evidence. Searching for disconfirming evidence is an important component of data analysis, as researchers might have a proclivity to find confirming rather than disconfirming evidence (Creswell & Miller, 2000). As mentioned above, after I completed coding and formulating the findings, I reread all of the transcripts to intentionally look for disconfirming evidence that could have been missed or overlooked

in the initial analysis. I also revisited the social network data to look for evidence that could be contradictory to my findings.

Seventh, external validity refers to how well the research conclusions can be generalized to a larger population (Anfara et al., 2002). Maxwell (1992) described generalizability as "the extent to which one can extend the account of a particular situation or population to other persons, times, or settings than those directly studied" (p. 293). Through my literature review in Chapter 2, I described how BPI is one example of a Promise Neighborhoods program, which in turn is a type of social partnership more broadly. Although the findings of this study might be informative to other Promise Neighborhoods and social partnerships, they are localized to BPI and should not be assumed generalizable to other contexts.

Finally, reliability refers to the consistency and replicability of the study processes over time, across researchers and methods (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Yin, 2014). The concept of reliability in qualitative research is rather contentious. Some researchers (see, e.g., Stenbacka, 2001) have argued that reliability is not an appropriate concept for qualitative research, whereas others (see, e.g., Patton, 2002) have argued that reliability in qualitative research is a consequence of the validity in a study, and that validity is sufficient to establish reliability. The methods and procedures described in the previous sections were intentionally designed to maintain rigorous standards in the processes of data collection and analysis, in order to support the reliability and validity of the study results.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodological decisions I made in conducting a two-phased, mixed methods study of one social partnership. The previous sections described the research setting, design of the study, data collection methods, study participants, data analysis strategies, and procedures enacted to reduce threats to validity and reliability. The following chapter will present the results of this research study, organized by the three research questions.

Chapter 4: Findings

In this chapter I will present the detailed results of this research study. This chapter is organized around the three research questions of this study. In the first section I answer my first research question and its two sub-questions: "What are the social network structures of the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of interorganizational communication and collaboration? (a) What do these networks suggest in terms of network connectivity? (b) What do these networks suggest in terms of network influence?" In the second section I answer my second research question: "How might these social network structures impact efforts at educational and community change?" And in the third section I answer my final research question: "What network processes surface as important for the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of impacting efforts at educational and community change?" A discussion of these research findings in the context of previous research will follow in the next and final chapter.

Research Question 1

In this section I will present the findings related to my first research question: "What are the social network structures of the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of interorganizational communication and collaboration?" Specifically, I will describe the results of the social network analysis using the partner survey data. Social network analysis allowed me to describe how organizations in the initiative were connected, by visualizing and analyzing the patterns of communication and collaboration among the organizations. Prior research suggests that both general network structure and the positioning of each organization within the network are important for understanding the influence that is conveyed through the network (Lipparini & Lomi, 1999; Provan et al.,

2005). First, I will discuss network connectivity, examining the networks as a whole. Second, I will examine network centrality by organization to learn more about what the network structures might suggest in terms of network influence. In both sections, the analyses are primarily descriptive in nature; discussions of how these structures may impact efforts at educational and community change will be discussed in more depth when I present the results of my second and third research questions in subsequent sections.

As described in more detail in Chapter 3, I used the social network analysis software program UCINET (Borgatti et al., 2002) to calculate the network connectivity measure (network density) and network centrality measures (degree, eigenvector, and betweenness centrality). Tables 10 and 11 in the previous chapter provide definitions and examples of these measures. I used the network visualization software Gephi (Bastian et al., 2009) to visualize the data as sociograms. Gephi provides a number of network visualization options that I used to examine and discuss the BPI networks below.

Network Connectivity

For this research study, network connectivity refers to whether or not the organizations within the Boston Promise Initiative communicate and collaborate with each other. Social network analysis allowed me to analyze network statistics and network visualizations to better understand patterns of communication and collaboration that are often hard to define. Network connectivity is important for this research because one of the primary goals of the Boston Promise Initiative, as well as other social partnerships, is to break down silos and spur communication and collaboration among partner organizations across sectors. As mentioned previously, all social partnerships are rooted

in the three defining characteristics outlined by Crane and Seitanidi (2014): Social partnerships involve the joining together of organizations across sectors to address a social problem. Network connectivity is one way to assess the "joining together" of organizations. In other words, examining network connectively allows me to describe the overall level of connectedness among organizations in BPI, which can be demonstrated by network density (Singer & Kegler, 2004; Valente, Chou, & Pentz, 2007).

Network density is a standard way to assess network connectivity. Network density is the percentage of ties that exist in a network relative to the total number of possible ties (Borgatti et al., 2013). Thus, as discussed in the previous chapter, the range of possible densities for a network is from 1 to 0, with values closer to 1 representing higher density and values closer to 0 indicating lower density. In the current study, network density is used to describe the overall levels of communication and collaboration among the BPI organizations.

Figure 4 illustrates the network connectivity of the communication and collaboration networks for the Boston Promise Initiative. The sociogram on the left illustrates the communication network and the sociogram on the right illustrates the collaboration network. For these figures, I used a circular layout, which simply places nodes into the shape of a circle. All 36 partner organizations are represented by colored nodes. The nodes are color coded by sector (see figure caption). In this figure the nodes are all sized equally. Each communication or collaboration tie is represented by a grey line connecting two nodes. As previously discussed, communication and collaboration in these networks are assumed reciprocal; thus, these figures illustrate nondirectional ties.

BPI Communication Network
Density = 0.36

BPI Collaboration Network
Density = 0.20

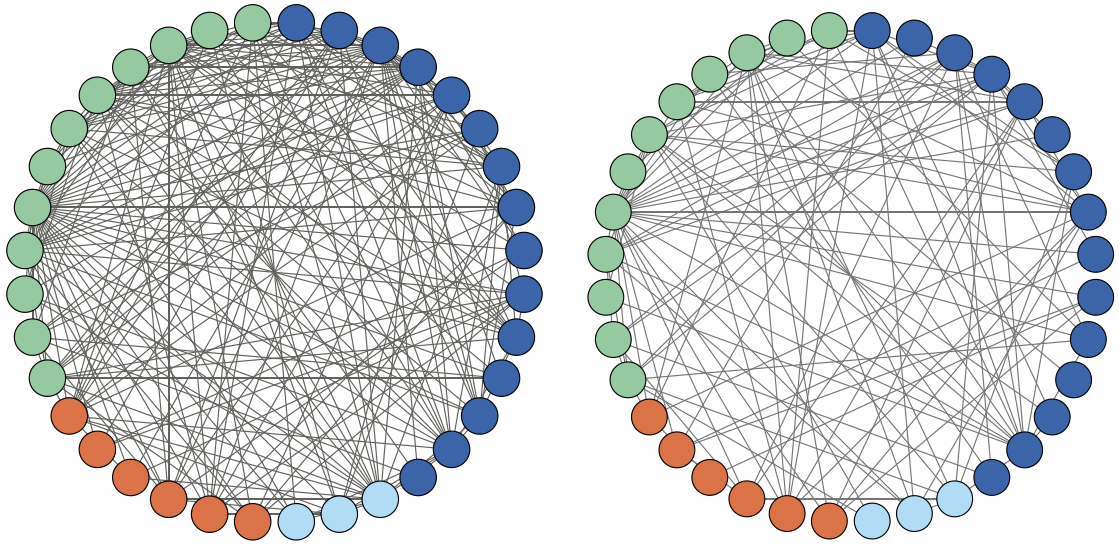


Figure 4: Network density of the BPI communication and collaboration networks (circle layout). Nodes are color coded by sector. Green = social and human services organization; dark blue = education services organization; orange = school; light blue = health and wellness organization.

The network density for communication among BPI partner organizations is 0.36, meaning approximately 36% of the total possible communication ties have been realized. The network density for collaboration among BPI partner organizations is 0.20, meaning approximately 20% of the total possible collaboration ties have been realized.

Figure 5 visualizes the same information in a more traditional sociogram layout using a standard formatting algorithm in Gephi (Force Atlas; Bastian et al., 2009). As with Figure 4, the nodes are color coded by sector and sized equally. The difference in node sizes between Figure 4 and 5 is due only to the scale of the image; it does not represent any additional meaning. The layout in Figure 5 organizes the network such that nodes with more ties are spatially placed toward the center of the sociogram whereas

nodes with fewer ties are placed in the periphery of the sociogram. Figures 4 and 5 show the same network connectivity data but visualized in different layouts.

BPI Communication Network
Density = 0.356

BPI Collaboration Network
Density = 0.198

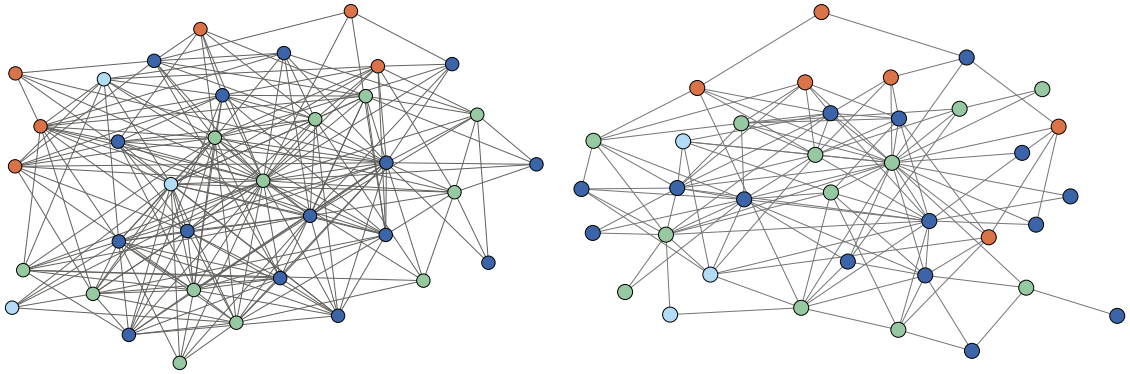


Figure 5. Network density of the BPI communication and collaboration networks. Nodes are color coded by sector. Green = social and human services organization; dark blue = education services organization; orange = school; light blue = health and wellness organization.

Although discussions and implications of these findings will be provided in the subsequent sections and following chapter, there are three important points to highlight considering this analysis. First, among the 36 partner organizations, there are 224 communication ties and 125 collaboration ties, resulting in fairly dense networks of communication and collaboration. These levels of connectivity are important because one of the primary goals of BPI is to spur communication and collaboration among partner organizations. Second, all formal partner organizations are connected in some way in both the communication and the collaboration networks. Although there are a number of organizations connected on the periphery, all organizations have at least three communication ties and at least one collaboration tie. One thing that I looked for that was not present in this network was isolated, or disconnected, organizations. This would have

been visualized as a node on the sociogram without any ties to other nodes. However, there are no isolated organizations within this network. Third, organizations are communicating and collaborating across sectors. The cross-sector collaboration is particularly easy to see in Figure 4. There are high numbers of ties within and across all four sectors represented in BPI.

Network connectivity in this study examined the extent of communication and collaboration taking place between partner organizations in BPI. Approximately 36% of the total possible communication ties have been realized and approximately 20% of the total possible collaboration ties have been realized. Whereas network connectivity examines the network as a whole, network centrality analyses allow us to examine the network at a more fine-grain level, particularly in terms of examining organizations' relative positions within the network.

Network Centrality

Whereas network connectivity examines the network as a whole, network centrality measures describe the relative position an organization occupies in a given network. Prior research on network centrality describes how highly central actors have increased influence within the network, due in part to access to resources through multiple channels and the potential to create new relationships that enhance social capital (Stuart, 1998; Tsai, 2001). Alternately, those actors that are less central receive less information and do not have the opportunities to benefit from the resources held in other parts of the network (Stuart, 1998; Tsai, 2001). Furthermore, less central actors may only receive the resources deemed necessary by those in highly centralized network positions (Burt, 2005). For this study, I used three measures of network centrality to example

network centrality within BPI: degree centrality, betweenness centrality, and eigenvector centrality (see Tables 10 & 11 in Chapter 3 for definitions and examples of these centrality measures). Together, I chose these network centrality measures to better understand how an organization's position in the network may impact the amount of influence it has within the network.

Degree centrality. Degree centrality is simply the number of other organizations each organization is connected to. For instance, if an organization is only connected to one other organization, its degree centrality would be 1. However, if an organization is connected to 24 other organizations, its degree centrality would be 24. Nodes with high degree centrality are highly visible and tend to be viewed as important in the network (Borgatti et al., 2013). Degree centrality is based on the extent to which organizations might share resources, such as information, with other organizations. (See Appendices F & G for full lists of degree centrality scores by organization.)

Degree centrality is an important measure to examine because it allows us to see how many other partners each organization in BPI is communicating or collaborating with. Figure 6 shows the communication network by degree centrality. The layout of this sociogram is the same as Figure 5 and the nodes are again color coded by sector. However, in this figure the nodes are sized by degree. Nodes that are larger have higher degree centrality and nodes that are smaller have lower degree centrality. The size key in the top right of the figure illustrates how node size correlates to degree centrality. The average degree centrality for communication across all organizations is 12.47, meaning that on average an organization in this network communicates with approximately 12.5 other organizations. The range of communication ties is large, from 3 to 34 with a

standard deviation of 6.5. Thus, the fewest number of organizations any single BPI organization communicates with about the initiative is 3 and the most is 34—just about the entire network. Social and human service organizations have the most communication ties on average, with 14.5 ties (range of 6 to 34), followed by educational services, with an average of 12.5 ties (range of 3 to 25); health and wellness organizations, with 11.6 ties on average (range of 5 to 20); and schools, with an average of 8.6 ties (range of 4 to 14).

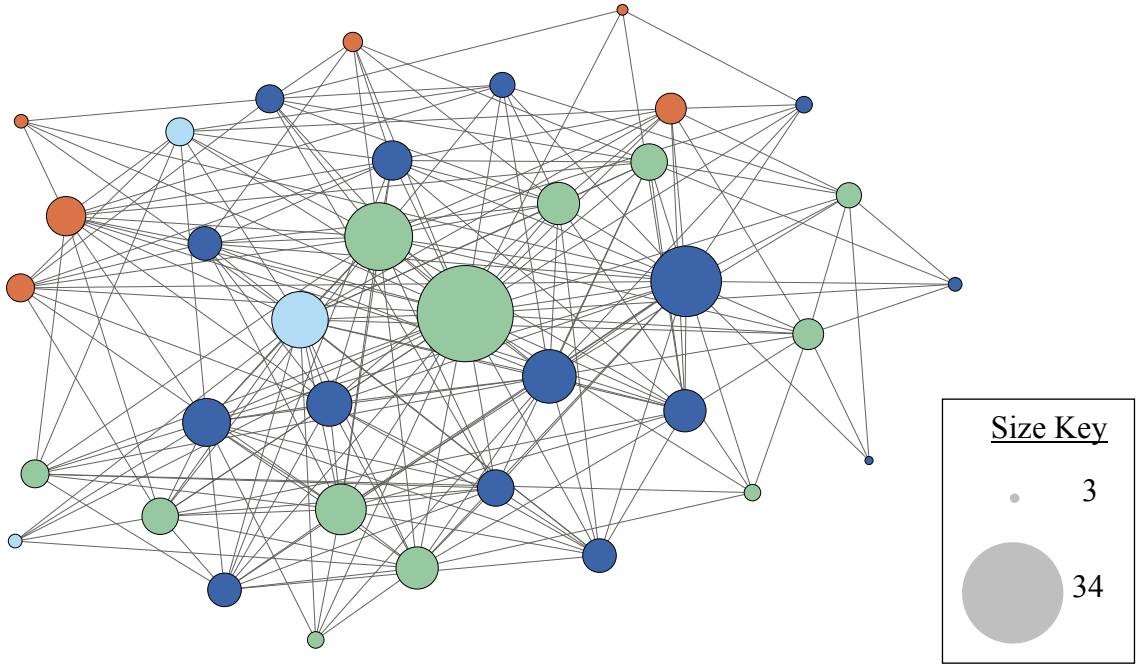


Figure 6. Degree centrality of the BPI communication network. Average degree centrality = 12.47 (range: 3–34, *SD* = 6.5). Nodes sized by degree centrality and color coded by sector. Green = social and human services organization; dark blue = education services organization; orange = school; light blue = health and wellness organization.

A few things of note surface when analyzing this sociogram. First, although one of the primary goals of BPI is educational change, schools tend to have few communication ties with partner organizations in BPI relative to other organizations.

Only one school is within the top half of organizational degree centrality scores, at 13th out of 36 with a total of 14 communication ties. Three schools have degree centrality scores in the bottom quarter of scores across all organizations. Relatedly, there few communication ties between schools in the network, indicating that schools are not talking with each other about issues broadly related to BPI. However, as the lead organization, DSNI has communication connections with each of the six schools. Although the schools do not seem to communicate among themselves, they all communicate to some extent with DSNI. Thus, if there is information that could be shared with schools, communication channels already exist.

Second, 75% of the partner organizations within BPI communicate with nine or more partner organizations. There are only nine organizations, or one-quarter of all partners, that communicate with fewer than nine others. These organizations tend to be on the periphery of the network and there is a risk that they could become disconnected from the network. For instance, the there is an educational services organization in the bottom right of the sociogram with three ties, the fewest in the network.

Figure 7 shows the collaboration network by degree centrality. The layout of this sociogram is the same as Figure 6 and the nodes are again color coded by sector and sized by degree centrality. Nodes that are larger have higher degree centrality and nodes that are smaller have lower degree centrality. The size key in the top right of the figure illustrates how node size correlates to degree centrality. The average degree centrality for collaboration across all organizations is 6.97, meaning that on average an organization in this network collaborates with approximately 7 other organizations. The range of collaboration ties is large, from 1 to 25 with a standard deviation of 4.87. Thus, the

fewest number of organizations any single BPI organization collaborates with about the initiative is 1 and the most is 25. For instance, on the lower end, one partner organization only collaborates with one other organization. This organization can be seen as the small dark blue node in the lower right part of the sociogram in Figure 7. On the other end of the scale, one organization collaborates with 25 other partners, as indicated by the large green node in the center of the sociogram. Social and human service organizations have the most collaboration ties on average, with 8.6 ties (range of 2 to 25), followed by educational services, with an average of 6.7 ties (range of 1 to 15); health and wellness organizations, with 5.3 ties on average (range of 2 to 8); and schools, with an average of 5.3 ties (range of 2 to 7).

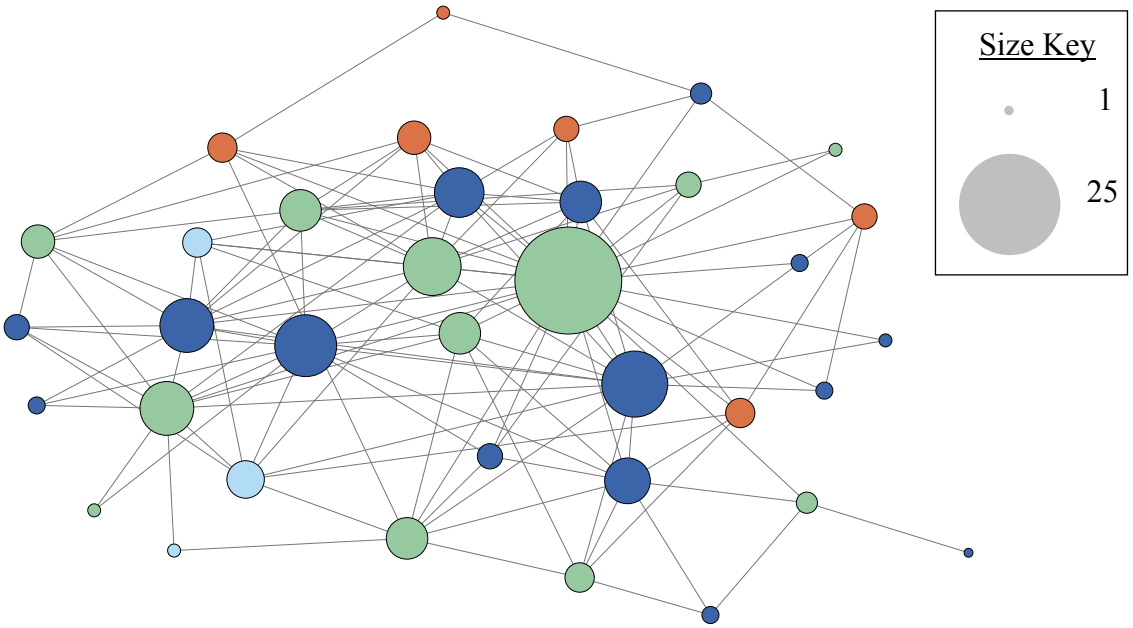


Figure 7. Degree centrality of the BPI collaboration network. Average degree centrality = 6.97 (range: 1–25, *SD* = 4.87). Nodes are sized by degree centrality and color coded by sector. Green = social and human services organization; dark blue = education services organization; orange = school; light blue = health and wellness organization.

As with Figure 6, schools tend to be on the periphery of the network. However, although only one school was within the top half of organizational degree centrality scores for communication, three schools make the top half of organizational degree centrality scores for collaboration, coming in at 15th, 16th, and 18th. Relatedly, only one school is in the bottom quarter of degree centrality scores for collaboration, whereas three schools were in this bottom quarter for communication. All of the schools but one are within two degrees of the average and within one degree of the mean. With the exception of one school that has only two collaborative relationships (seen in the top center of the sociogram), schools are collaborating at an average level within BPI. As with communication, though, there are few collaboration ties among the schools in the network, demonstrating that both communication and collaboration across schools is limited.

Another observation that this sociogram illustrates is that although there are a few communications ties between schools and health and wellness organizations in the network, as shown in Figure 6 above, there are no collaboration ties between these types of organizations. Collaboration with schools is limited to social and human service organizations and educational service organizations, and, on one occasion, with another school. As the lead organization, DSNI has collaboration ties with five of the six schools in the network.

Degree centrality is a measure that examines the number of other organizations each organization is connected to. Degree centrality is an important measure to examine because it allows us to see how many others an organization is communicating or collaborating with, a core aspect of BPI. There are fewer collaboration ties than

communication ties, which is not surprising given the additional time and energy that collaborative relationships require. However, it is important to be aware of the difference, because although communication ties are important, it is also important for social partnerships that organizations not only communicate but collaborate through mutually reinforcing activities. For both communication and collaboration, schools tended to have fewer ties than organizations in other sectors. The sociograms also illustrate that schools have few connections among themselves, with only one collaborative relationship between schools. Although there are a few communication ties between schools and health and wellness organizations, there were no collaboration ties identified, demonstrating only slight communication and no collaboration between schools and health and wellness organizations within BPI. DSNI has the highest degree centrality for both communication and collaboration. DSNI has communication ties with 34 other organizations and collaboration ties with 25 other organizations. DSNI has nine more communication ties and ten more collaboration ties than the organizations with the next-highest scores, which is also illustrated by the large green node in the center of each sociogram. DSNI communicates with all six of the schools in the initiative and collaborates with five of those schools.

For this study, network connectivity refers to whether or not the organizations within the Boston Promise Initiative communicate and collaborate with each other. Next, I will describe the social network structure by eigenvector centrality, which takes into consideration how well-connected each organization's partners are.

Eigenvector centrality. The second centrality measure I used to analyze the BPI communication and collaboration networks is eigenvector centrality. An organization's

eigenvector centrality is proportional to the sum of centralities of the nodes it is adjacent to (Borgatti et al., 2013). Put more simply, an organization with high eigenvector centrality is connected to organizations that are themselves well-connected. Whereas eigenvector centrality is related to degree centrality, organizations with high eigenvector centrality do not necessarily have high degree centrality. (See Tables 10 & 11 in Chapter 3 for an example of eigenvector centrality; see Appendices F & G for full lists of eigenvector centrality scores by organization.)

Eigenvector centrality is an important measure to examine because it does not solely rely on the number of connections each organization has; rather, it takes into consideration the relative influence of these partners. For instance, an organization with only a few well-connected partners may have higher eigenvector centrality than another organization with a large number of ties to poorly connected partners. Thus, if a relationship with a well-connected partner allows an organization to draw on broad resources, then this may be more important than the sheer number of connections. Whereas degree centrality is solely focused on the number of other organizations each partner is connected to, eigenvector centrality adds into the equation how central each of those organizations are themselves.

Figure 8 shows the communication network by eigenvector centrality. The layout of this sociogram is the same as those in Figures 5, 6, and 7 and the nodes are again color coded by sector. In this figure, nodes are sized by eigenvector centrality. Nodes that are larger have higher eigenvector centrality and nodes that are smaller have lower eigenvector centrality. The size key in the top right of the figure illustrates how node size correlates to eigenvector centrality. The average eigenvector centrality for

communication across all organizations is 0.15 with a range of 0.03 to 0.34 and a standard deviation of 0.07. Social and human service organizations have the highest communication eigenvector centrality scores on average, with 0.17 (range of 0.08 to 0.34), followed by educational services, with an average of 0.16 (range of 0.03 to 0.26); health and wellness organizations, with an average of 0.14 (range of 0.08 to 0.23); and schools, with an average of 0.11 (range of 0.05 to 0.17). Although this is not always the case, eigenvector centrality for the communication network is almost identical to degree centrality in terms of organizational rankings.

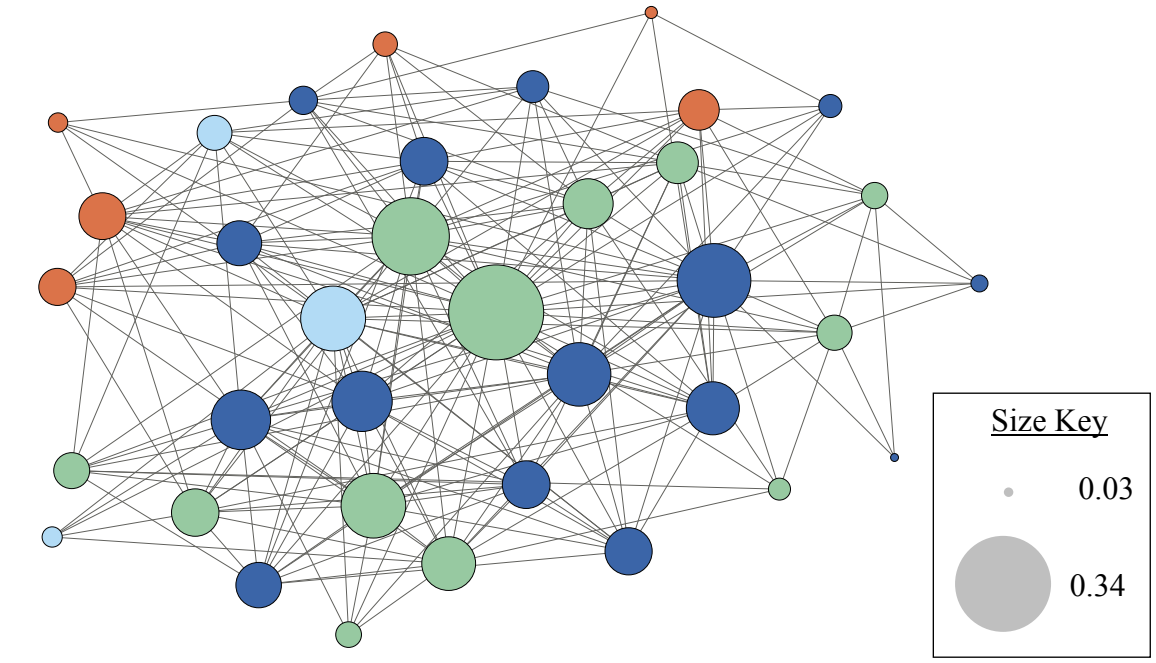


Figure 8. Eigenvector centrality of the BPI communication network. Average eigenvector centrality = 0.15 (range: 0.03–0.34, *SD* = 0.07). Nodes are sized by eigenvector centrality and color coded by sector. Green = social and human services organization; dark blue = education services organization; orange = school; light blue = health and wellness organization.

Figure 9 shows the collaboration network by eigenvector centrality. The layout of this sociogram is the same as those in previous figures and the nodes are again color

coded by sector and sized by eigenvector centrality. Nodes that are larger have higher eigenvector centrality and nodes that are smaller have lower eigenvector centrality. The size key in the top right of the figure illustrates how node size correlates to eigenvector centrality. The average eigenvector centrality for collaboration across all organizations is 0.14 with a range of 0.01 to 0.40 and a standard deviation of 0.09. Social and human service organizations have the highest collaboration eigenvector centrality scores on average, with 0.17 (range of 0.05 to 0.40), followed by educational services, with an average of 0.14 (range of 0.01 to 0.30); health and wellness organizations, with an average of 0.12 (range of 0.04 to 0.16); and schools, with an average of 0.11 (range of 0.02 to 0.18).

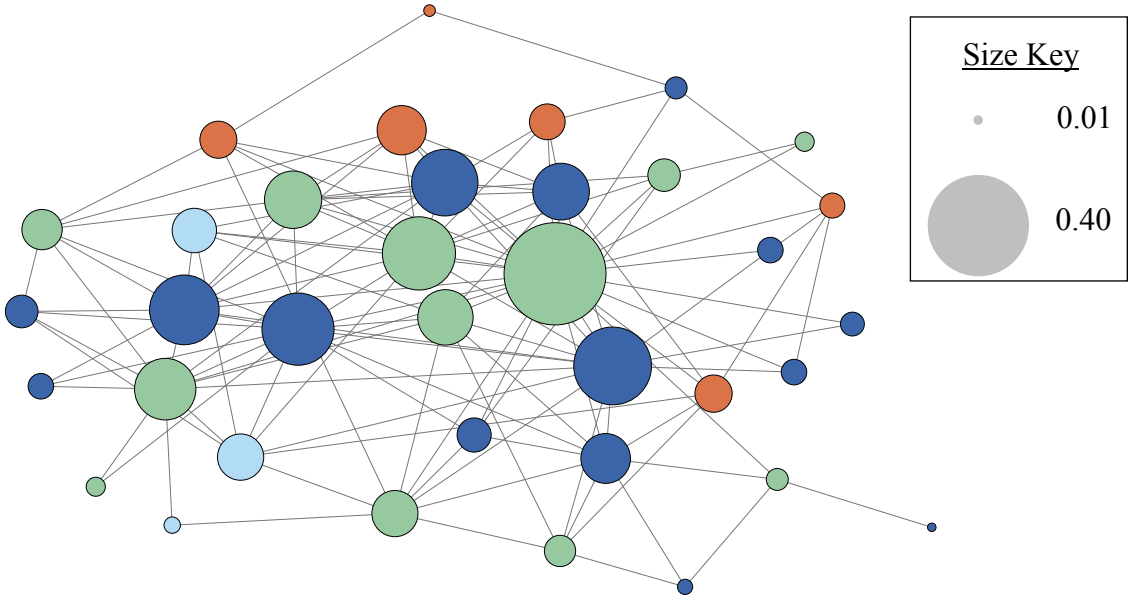


Figure 9. Eigenvector centrality of the BPI collaboration network. Average eigenvector centrality = 0.14 (range: 0.01–0.40, *SD* = 0.09). Nodes are sized by eigenvector centrality and color coded by sector. Green = social and human services organization; dark blue = education services organization; orange = school; light blue = health and wellness organization.

As with the communication network above, eigenvector centrality for the collaboration network is almost identical to degree centrality in terms of organizational rankings. Whereas degree centrality measures the number of organizations each organization is connected to, eigenvector centrality measures the relative influence of each partner. Thus, organizations that are themselves connected to highly connected organizations have higher eigenvector centrality. Consistent with degree centrality for both communication and collaboration, DSNI had the highest eigenvector centrality scores across relationships. Although in many cases eigenvector centrality can reveal different patterns of centrality than degree centrality, in this case, across communication and collaboration networks, degree centrality and eigenvector centrality are nearly identical in terms of organizational order. Next, I will describe the social network structure by examining betweenness centrality.

Betweenness Centrality. The third measure of network centrality that I used to better understand the structures of communication and collaboration within BPI was betweenness centrality. Betweenness centrality is a measure of how often a node falls along the shortest path between other nodes (Borgatti et al., 2013). A node's betweenness centrality is 0 when it is never along the shortest path between any two other nodes (see Tables 10 & 11 in Chapter 3 for an example of betweenness centrality). Betweenness is often interpreted as the potential to control what flows through the network; that is, organizations in strategic locations may have influence over what is passed on to the rest of the network. In the social network literature, brokers are actors that accrue social capital or have a strategic capacity because of their position in the network (Burt, 2005; Gould & Fernandez, 1989; Heaney, 2006). Thus, betweenness centrality refers to how

likely an organization is to be a broker or a bridge between any two other organizations. (See Appendices F & G for full lists of betweenness centrality scores by organization.)

Figure 10 shows the communication network by betweenness centrality. The layout of this sociogram is the same as those in previous figures and the nodes are again color coded by sector. In this figure, the nodes are sized by betweenness centrality. Nodes that are larger have higher betweenness centrality and nodes that are smaller have lower betweenness centrality. The size key in the top right of the figure illustrates how node size correlates to betweenness centrality. It is clear that this sociogram looks very different than those in previous figures. Although the organizations are laid out the same, there is a much more polarized difference between organizations with high betweenness centrality and those with low betweenness centrality.

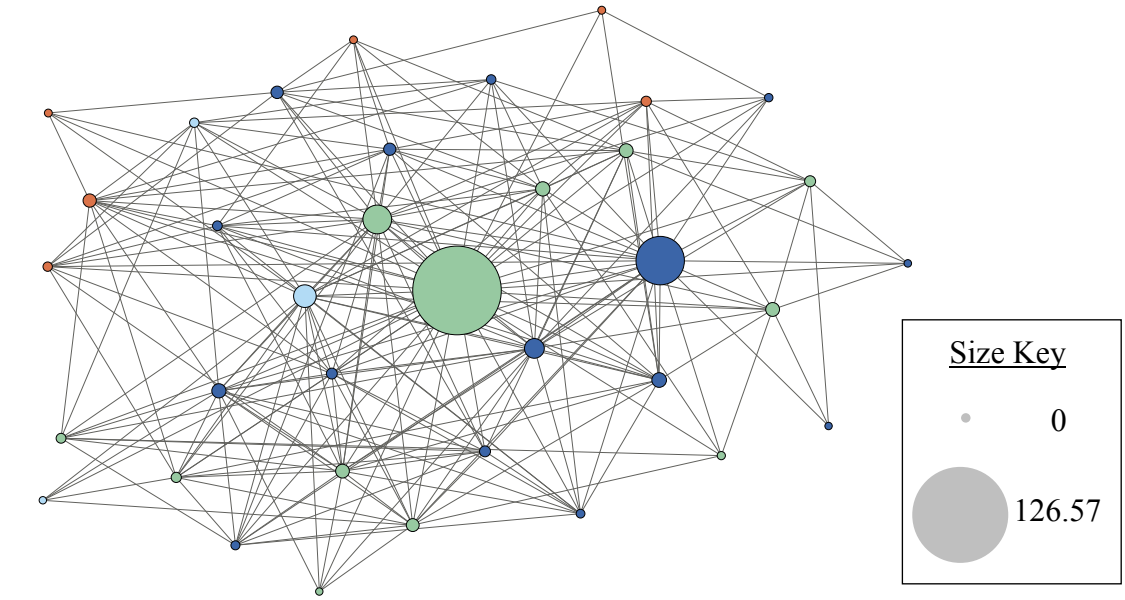


Figure 10. Betweenness centrality of the BPI communication network. Average betweenness centrality = 11.53 (range: 0–126.57, *SD* = 41.64). Nodes are sized by betweenness centrality and color coded by sector. Green = social and human services organization; dark blue = education services organization; orange = school; light blue = health and wellness organization.

As the lead organization, DSNI has far and away the highest betweenness centrality score, as illustrated by the large green node in the middle of the sociogram. Other than one educational services organization, all of the other organizations have low betweenness centrality scores. Together this points to a communication network in which DSNI is often in the position of bridge or broker between other organizations within the communication network.

Figure 11 shows the collaboration network by betweenness centrality. The layout of this sociogram is the same as those in previous figures and the nodes are again color coded by sector and sized by betweenness centrality. Nodes that are larger have higher betweenness centrality and nodes that are smaller have lower betweenness centrality. The size key in the top right of the figure illustrates how node size correlates to betweenness centrality. Just as in Figure 10, as the lead organization DSNI has far and away the highest betweenness centrality score, as illustrated by the large green node in the middle of the sociogram. The majority of the other organizations have low betweenness centrality scores, although a few organizations here and there have slightly higher scores. However, these smaller broker roles may be particularly important. Often the smaller brokers are connected to organizations that DSNI is not. For instance, in the bottom right part of the sociogram there is a social and human services organization that is the sole organization with a collaborative tie to one of the education services organizations. These smaller brokers may be key for engaging organizations that are on the periphery of the network and at risk of being disengaged or disconnected.

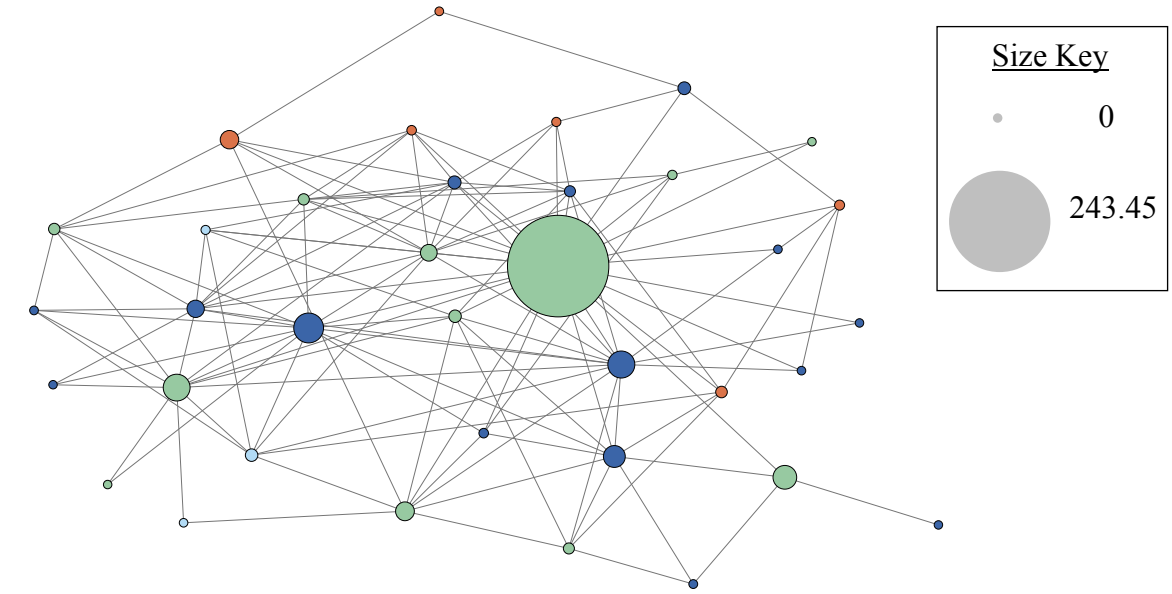


Figure 11. Betweenness centrality of the BPI collaboration network. Average betweenness centrality = 18.58 (range: 0–243.45, *SD* = 23.00). Nodes are sized by betweenness centrality and color coded by sector. Green = social and human services organization; dark blue = education services organization; orange = School; light blue = health and wellness organization.

Together, the betweenness centrality measures illustrate a network in which DSNI is often in the position of bridge or broker between other organizations. Organizations in such positions can facilitate the flow of resources between and among organizations. Alternately, there is also the risk that the broker can hinder the flow of resources—for instance, think of a bottleneck or, differently, a childhood game of telephone. The more any given organization is located on the path between multiple other organizations, the higher the potential for it to control or influence the network interactions. With respect to betweenness centrality, DSNI is again the most central actor across both communication and collaboration networks. For this measure, this means that DSNI often may be in a brokering or bridging role between and among other BPI organizations. This may have

implications in terms of what and how resources, such as information, flow through the networks.

Summary

In this section, I outlined the findings from my first research question: "What are the social network structures of the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of interorganizational communication and collaboration?" Social network analysis allowed me to describe how organizations in the initiative were connected, by visualizing and analyzing the patterns of communication and collaboration among the organizations. I analyzed the communication and collaboration network structures in terms of network connectivity and network centrality. In doing so, I provided a descriptive analysis of the communication and collaboration network structures that make up BPI. In terms of network connectivity, the analysis showed networks of communication and collaboration that span sectors and connect organizations across the initiative. All 36 partner organizations are connected to the network in some way. In terms of network centrality, DSNI was consistently identified as the most central actor across measures for both communication and collaboration. Further, schools and health and wellness organizations tended to be less central in the network on average relative to social and human service organizations and educational service organizations. The implications and potential explanations of these descriptive analyses will be further explored in the following sections.

Research Question 2

In this section I will present the findings related to my second research question: "How might these social network structures impact efforts at educational change?" These

findings are drawn from both the social network analysis and qualitative interviews. As mentioned previously, the final section of each interview consisted of viewing and analyzing sociograms with interviewees. For this part of the interview, participants were shown the sociograms that illustrate degree centrality (see Figures 6 & 7). They were not shown the sociograms that sized nodes by eigenvector centrality nor betweenness centrality. Thus, any references to the sociograms from the interviewees are in relation to Figures 6 and 7.

In analyzing the interview data, four interconnected themes emerged related to how network structures might impact efforts at educational and community change. These themes were: DSNI's ability to convene and connect partners, access to network resources and social capital, engaging schools in partnership, and sustaining network structures beyond the grant period. I will discuss these topics in order and then summarize the section with key takeaways across findings. As mentioned in Chapter 3, I intentionally included detailed accounts from the interviewees corresponding to each finding as a way to increase the reliability of the findings and interpretations.

Table 14

Summary of Research Question 2 Findings

- DSNI is uniquely positioned to effectively convene and connect partners based on their history of work in the neighborhood and their reputation.
- BPI provides organizations access to network resources and social capital that they might not otherwise have access.
- Engaging schools in partnership is complex, offering both benefits and challenges.
- Significant concerns exist over the sustainability of the network structures beyond the funding for the grant period.

DSNI's Ability to Convene and Connect Partners

For BPI partner organizations, the social network analysis revealed a dense network of communication among partner organizations and a slightly less dense, but still robust, network of collaboration. The visual densities of the networks illustrated in the sociograms were consistently viewed as showing that communication and collaboration between the organizations was successful. The social network data consistently identified DSNI as a central node in the networks. In each of the sociograms that illustrated network centrality (Figures 6–11) DSNI is represented by the largest green node in the center of each sociogram. DSNI received the highest centrality scores for each centrality measure (degree, eigenvector, and betweenness) across the communication and communication networks. The findings show that DSNI communicates with nearly every organization in the initiative and collaborates with all but 10. The social network analysis illustrated dense networks of communication and collaboration and consistently identified DSNI as a very central actor across measures.

During the interviews, all of the interviewees (11 out of 11) highlighted DSNI's ability to build relationships as a strength of the partnership that supported efforts at educational and community change. For example, upon viewing the sociograms for a few moments, three interviewees responded as follows:

> It's pretty amazing, actually. This speaks to the core strengths of DSNI, right? This is their strength.
>
> —Executive director, education services organization

> This is really cool. This is really exciting because it shows it in a visual way what we do feel really proud of here—and I think what makes DSNI successful. . . .

> [BPI] feels like it's an effort to use the existing strong qualities of the programs or of the neighborhood and pulling it together with an organizing force behind it. DSNI did a great job of playing that role. They're very good at that.
>
> —Director, social and human services organization

> I think DSNI is uniquely positioned to do the facilitation piece—create the spaces for group decision-making. I think that's where their strength is.
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization.

These interviewees, as well as many others, described DSNI's ability to convene and connect partners as a strength, praising DSNI as "uniquely positioned" to facilitate an initiative like BPI. What makes DSNI so strong at convening and connecting partners? Interviewees suggested that it is because of its organizational identity and its history in the community. For example, when describing DSNI, one interviewee stated:

> [DSNI is] representative of the demographics of the community it serves, located in the heart of the neighborhood, so, they're not removed. . . . I think one of the biggest challenges that we face in education today is around understanding equity. I think that they live and breathe that. They're equitable based on who they are, where they are, and how accessible they are and what they're willing to do and to offer us to be the best we can be.
>
> —Administrator, school

Other interviewees shared similar sentiments, discussing their respect for how DSNI has served the community and the commitment it demonstrates to residents. For example, two interviewees further illustrated this point:

> I always respected the work that DSNI did in that way, that they really knew how to engage the community, they knew how to engage families. They had this incredibly deep history of fighting the system and really bringing people together to take control of their neighborhood. I always liked that about them, and about who they are. I think Boston Promise was an effort to really build on that.

—Executive director, social and human services organization

> I appreciate their perspective. I certainly appreciate their brilliance. And their commitment to making things better for kids that don't have a lot of advocates.
>
> —Board member, education services organization

Thus, as BPI emerged, many of the relationships and connections with partner organizations already had been built and reinforced through decades of work. Partner organizations held deep respect for DSNI and the work it has done in the neighborhood. DSNI was able to leverage the relationships it had built, and the connections it had made, to convene partner organizations for BPI. Other interviewees also emphasized this point, for example:

> It's our history and our reputation. We didn't have to create a lot of these relationships out of thin air when Promise started, and we just activated them for Promise. It goes back to our history. Pretty plain and simple.
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization

> I actually thought that DSNI was well-positioned, given the legacy of its work. That it really did have a neighborhood, and a very participatory framework at the neighborhood level for what it wanted to do.
>
> —Public official, social and human services organization

> They've surveyed the landscape and they are the people you go to when you either want to learn something or want to do something. Obviously, BPI makes them bigger because they have funds, but they'd still be a pretty big circle in that array [in reference to the sociograms]. . . . I like so much how knowledgeable they are about the principals, for example, in the schools that are in the catchment area. They know who the allies are, and they know who the people are that are doing the right thing for kids on a day-to-day basis.
>
> —Board member, education services organization

> They had the right connections, and they had personal connections, and I think that that's really important. . . . Through all the other work that they've done throughout the decades, they have strong relationships with the city.
>
> —Director, education services organization

> I don't think it's new to BPI; I think that it's because of the history of that organization and all the different partnerships they have across the city and their commitment to the neighborhood. If you're really committed to a neighborhood the way that they are, of course they're going to have more partnerships with more people. . . . I think DSNI knows the community well enough to know who we would want to be partners. Who or what are organizations that have really strong programs and great reputations. They hear from people that receive services from those places and have good things to say about them. I think that the strength of the initiative has a lot to do with all of the individual partners and the work that has happened in the past.
>
> —Director, social and human services organization

Interviewees consistently described the deep respect for DSNI and the work it has done in the neighborhood. DSNI was able to leverage the relationships it had developed to convene partner organizations for BPI. The dense networks of communication and collaboration described in the analysis for my first research question represent more than BPI; they also demonstrate the long history of partnership that DSNI has. As BPI was implemented, DSNI was well positioned to draw on its already established relationships, and given its history and reputation, was in a good position to facilitate BPI as the lead organization. DSNI also was able to build new relationships as well as strengthen existing relationships in a way that supported efforts at educational and community change. The communication and collaboration network structures represent years of partnerships across sectors to address social problems within the community. Importantly, and leading

to the second theme, this structure provides access to network resources and social capital to BPI partner organizations.

Access to Network Resources and Social Capital

Building from DSNI's ability to convene and connect partners, a second theme that surfaced in terms of how the social network structures of BPI may impact efforts at educational change involved organizations' access to network resources and social capital. As noted above, interviewees viewed the dense communication and collaboration networks illustrated by the sociograms as successful. One of the benefits of dense network structures is what they might imply in terms of the exchange of resources and social capital across the network. Because DSNI has been successful in getting partners to the table, organizations may have access to the resources embedded throughout the network in ways that they might not otherwise have.

Organizational representatives identified by BPI staff members were generally senior leaders within their organizations. For example, of the sample of representatives who participated in the survey for this study, 18% were executive directors, 33% were directors, 30% were in administrative or managerial roles, 9% were school administrators, 6% were board members, and 3% were public officials. The engagement of senior leaders reinforces the legitimacy participating in the partnership, ensures a high-level of expertise, as well as connects individuals with decision-making power within their organization. As two respondents noted:

> You got a bunch of people around the table who were leaders in their field. It was pretty impressive.
>
> —Executive director, social and human services organization

> With very large institutions bringing their leadership to the table over a concern of maybe 100 students or 500 students, right—just a tiny fraction of the total student population, the total resident population even, of Boston—bringing these institutions to the table to work with that small a cohort is, for us, a sign of progress and shows the power of place-based change. The fact that these institutions are willing to come to the table to work with relatively small groups of people shows that they actually value the neighborhoods and individual residents.
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization

BPI provided space and opportunity for senior leaders to build new connections and strengthen existing relationships. Importantly, these relationships were formed across sectors, breaking down traditional silos and connecting organizations that may not have been previously connected. Connecting and aligning senior leaders across organizations is important because it allows for productive and strategic exchange of resources; for example, knowledge and expertise. As one interviewee noted:

> A lot of it is the relationship-building and breaking down those barriers and bringing people together who previously hadn't really been talking.
>
> —Director, education services organization

Another respondent provided a specific example of the importance of access to social capital through network structures, using the collaboration sociogram (Figure 7):

> I'm surprised to see [a particular social and human services organization] and this linkage between [it and two other organizations]. This sort of triangle here, aligning these three institutions in a productive way for our students would be a huge win, and to see that they already have deliverables tied to each other already, that's important. . . . I think what we're talking about is how do you move these organizations to be supporting residents of this neighborhood, and bring resources to bear in this neighborhood?
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization

In this example, the interviewee highlighted the collaboration among three partner organizations. The organizations the interviewee identified are large, citywide organizations with significant resources. The interviewee was happily surprised that they were collaborating with each other, and immediately started thinking through ways to leverage such relationships. Thus, these organizations being connected to the network increased the potential to access and apply their resources within BPI. Examples such as this demonstrate the potential to leverage relationships in a way that provides access to resources and social capital for partner organizations across the initiative. Other interviewees expand on this point as well:

> A lot of it was also looking at the work that we were performing within our own organizations and how that had an impact . . . how it could benefit the initiative. This was like a true collective impact approach because there was a multi-sector representation at the table. I brought the public health perspective and there were folks from [a particular health and wellness organization]. So, it was truly the beginning of (a) "How do we do this together?" and (b) "Oh, you're doing this? Oh, really?" So, it was a joint endeavor on how we could have a positive impact.
>
> —Director, health and wellness organization

> In terms of the program, it was an opportunity for me to inform my staff around the work that's happening in the neighborhood . . . the work that's happening so they'll be aware, so if somebody knocks on their door, this is an opportunity to participate in this process.
>
> —Director, health and wellness organization

> I think that the strength of the initiative has a lot to do with all of the individual partners and the work that has happened in the past. It was like fitting pieces of a puzzle together. I think those partnerships are important because no one organization is going to have great programming for all of those different needs of

> a community. I think they did a good job of pulling together the programs that are already out there.
>
> —Director, social and human services organization

> [BPI] gives us some awareness of some of what other organizations are doing. I mean we weren't aware of some of their programming and then we could refer people to their programs when necessary. . . . I think we definitely got something out of being part of a bigger initiative and having our role but knowing that there were others that were contributing in different ways. It lets you know you don't have to do everything, you keep doing what you're good at. We do a little bit of everything but it's good to know there's others doing good work out there.
>
> —Director, social and human services organization

In addition to creating access to social capital, the network structures may allow DSNI as a grant maker to strategically distribute financial resources among the network. For example, three interviewees described this point:

> I think this [sociogram] partly reflects the stream of funding that exists. So, DSNI has this grant from the Department of Education, and then they fund work . . . I'm thinking specifically about the schools here, they fund programming that happens in the [schools] and they have communications with their team, but the sort of flow of the work is one-directional. By that I mean, they fund [a particular school] to have afterschool and summer programming.
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization

> I think BPI—maybe being the Promise Initiative model, but also because it came from DSNI—I think they were really willing to look at more grassroots, smaller organizations. I think that is amazing.
>
> —Executive director, social and human services organization

> I think [it's] smart in some ways in that it was a way to distribute resources, hopefully strategically, and enrich other organizations. Create the kind of alignment and connective tissue with dollars as the tool.
>
> —Public official, social and human services organization

DSNI leverages the relationships it has to distribute financial resources throughout the network. In some cases, as illustrated by the first quote above, DSNI is able to fund educational services organizations to provide programming within the schools. In other cases, such as the third quote, DSNI had an opportunity to fund smaller, grassroots organizations in order to build their capacity to engage as a network partner. Strategically distributing BPI funding is another way DSNI was able to build new relationships and strengthen existing relationships in ways that might impact educational and community change.

Organizational brokering surfaced as another important aspect of the access to network resources and social capital. Betweenness centrality is one way to examine brokering within a network. As illustrated in Figures 10 and 11, DSNI's betweenness centrality is demonstrably higher than all of the other organizations, represented by the large green node in the center of the sociograms. The scores are so high because DSNI frequently falls along the shortest paths between any two other organizations in the BPI network. This means that DSNI is often in a position to broker communication and collaboration relationships. Organizations with high betweenness centrality, like DSNI, can act as bridges or brokers between other organizations in the initiative and facilitate the flow of resources—financial or otherwise—between them.

One interviewee named a concern over whether or not DSNI wanted to be at the center, or hub, of the network, or whether or not it was most efficient to have DSNI as the hub. The interviewee asked:

> Do the hubs that exist in this network, do they effectively broker a network that most directly reaches people? . . . The hubs make a lot of sense, but I think this is in some ways depicting a concern. So, creating this ecosystem—this starts to look like City Hall a little bit because everything is kind of connected to [DSNI]. And the question is, strategically, does this afford the benefit that you want to residents? That you want to schools? (*public official, social and human services*).

In many ways, brokering can be a positive thing. For instance, a broker may be able to connect two previously unconnected organizations for the benefit of the initiative. In other cases, however, brokering can be a negative thing. For instance, the broker can control the information or resources that flow between two organizations, perhaps acting as a bottleneck if capacity is limited. Additionally, a lot of responsibility can be placed on the broker to ensure that organizations have up-to-date information. Imagine, for instance, the game of telephone. Being responsible for continually re-communicating messages could become a challenge. As a reminder, interviewees were only shown Figures 6 and 7, which illustrate degree centrality. They were not shown the figures that illustrate betweenness centrality, which I believe would have led to more in-depth conversations about the role of brokering and DSNI's strategic position within the network.

The network structures and interview data show that DSNI was successful at getting organizations to communicate and collaborate and, generally, it was the senior leaders at organizations who were engaged in the partnership. As such, dense networks of communication and collaboration created the potential for organizations to access

network resources and social capital in the network, such as information, knowledge, expertise, and potentially other resources. DSNI was the most central node by degree centrality and eigenvector centrality, demonstrating that it is the most highly connected organization in the network, both in terms of communication and collaboration. Additionally, DSNI is in the strategic location of being a broker, acting as an intermediary or connector between other organizations. Because DSNI has been successful in convening partners and building relationships, organizations may have access to the resources embedded throughout the network in ways that they might not otherwise have.

Engaging Schools in Partnership

A third theme that surfaced was the nature of engaging schools in social partnerships. A consistent area of discussion across interviews was the location of the schools within the BPI network sociograms. Taken together, the insights from interviewees paint a complex picture of schools engaging in community-wide partnerships.

The social network analysis revealed and illustrated that schools tended to have fewer average communication and collaboration partnerships within the initiative than organizations in other sectors, despite being a primary focus of the Promise Neighborhoods initiative. Schools on average communicated with about eight or nine other organizations and collaborated with about five other organizations. In the sociograms, schools tended to be more peripherally located, due primarily to having fewer ties than the central actors. Interview respondents were quick to note this when reviewing the sociograms. For instance:

> This doesn't surprise me, but I would have liked to have seen more involvement around the schools, given the initiative. I know that some of the schools were present at the [roundtable], but I just would have liked to see them more represented.
>
> —Director, health and wellness organization

> Because BPI is so focused on schools and education, . . . most of the other organizations I'm thinking of off the top my head . . . have something to do with the schools too—so I would have thought [the schools] were more central.
>
> —Director, social and human services organization

> I think particularly the schools at the periphery there, something gives me pause about seeing that, and wondering about the efficacy, especially since a lot of attention was focused on schools as the locus of change.
>
> —Public official, social and human services organization

Interviewees were generally disappointed, though not surprised, with the location of the schools in the network and the number of communication and collaboration ties they had. In many cases, interviewees were quick to describe the challenges of engaging with schools in partnership. The challenges identified by interviewees primarily related to leadership changes at the schools and the time and energy for partnership work given other responsibilities required of school leaders. For instance, a few quotes illustrate these challenges:

> The day-to-day work of being a principal is so exhausting that even having a speck on [the sociogram] is wonderful, and again, it says something about a school that doesn't even have a speck on there.
>
> —Board member, education services organization

> There's only one of [the schools] that hasn't had leadership changes, right? . . . So, I think there's a piece of bringing them along that's really challenging,

> because if you're a new school leader, it's overwhelming. And someone else telling you that they want you to do something is not your first priority.
>
> —Executive director, education services organization

> I taught for 13 years, so I have a real visceral reaction sometimes to schools and partnerships, because having been in the school, there's so many organizations that are trying to partner with you that are actually not helpful. Especially schools in the city, where you're basically putting out fires and trying to catch kids up. Partnership is almost like, you know Maslow's hierarchy? Love it. I love it. It's almost like schools are on that bottom rung, just trying to keep it together, and actually facilitating true partnership is so hard. . . . I've never been in an affluent school, but my sense is it would be much easier to partner with schools, where kids are safe and are not dealing with so much trauma, and know how to read.
>
> —Executive director, social and human services organization

The challenges identified by interviewees primarily related to leadership changes at the schools and the capacity for partnership work, as illustrated by the above quotes. An additional challenge that received less consistent attention across interviewees is also worth mentioning. A few interviewees discussed whether or not school leaders see themselves as community leaders based on how students in Boston are assigned to schools. In Boston, school assignment is city-wide, so the schools in the community service students from all over the city of Boston, not just the surrounding neighborhood. The interviewee described that a down side to this policy is that school leaders may not see themselves as community leaders if they are serving students from across the city.

As part of BPI, DSNI facilitated a community of practice for school principals, with reportedly seven schools with very active members. The community of practice was created for principals to come together to discuss their day-to-day work, talk about challenges they are facing, and discuss opportunities for partnerships with community

organizations. As mentioned in the analysis, few communication or collaboration connections were identified among schools themselves in the social network analysis. However, two respondents described a different picture of how schools engage with each other. For instance, both interviewees described a community of practice for school principals. Yet the social network sociograms show minimal or no communication or collaboration between the schools in the neighborhood. This could perhaps be due to missing data, confusion over the survey questions, or the timing of the survey. One interviewee mentioned that the principal community of practice is fairly new, but it was unclear how new it was and whether or not it was implemented at the time of the survey. In either case, it is important to know that in this case the qualitative findings do not support the social network analysis findings in terms of communication within the school sector.

I was only able to interview one school leader; however, this leader painted a very positive picture of how the community of practice, and partnerships within BPI writ large, were impacting this leader's school:

> It is interesting because I really wasn't groomed to do marketing . . . I was groomed as an educator, but when you bring yourself to the work, you don't just rely on what you've learned. You rely on what you know and what you believe. And if your belief is that we're a village and it takes a village, then you go out and you bring that village in and you make it happen. . . .
>
> Schools are competitive because we have all of this accountability and you're being judged and usually the sanctions in the past haven't been very nice. . . . Folks walk around really stressed . . . and they're really competitive. When you're in such a competitive environment, you're not networking, you're not collaborating, you're not building professional community, you're not sharing best practice by the very nature of being competitive. You're keeping secrets,

> right? And whatever is working for you that could possibly benefit one of your colleagues, well you're not sharing it because you want to make sure you surpass your colleague, right? And so being in this network allows us to collaborate. It allows us to build meaningful capacity through brokering supports, through sharing best practices, through mentoring, through just sheer relationships that are pleasant, that are positive. But it also allows us to problem solve collectively. Many heads are better than one, all hands on deck—that sort of mentality. And it's truly evident in this work, whereas it's sometimes compromised in larger systems because we're still working in silos in many instances and the silos continue to breathe the competition. It's when you organize for collective responsibility you break down the silos, and you're able to grow as a group and just not as an individual. . . .
>
> I think relationships are key. I think [DSNI] built meaningful relationships with all of the schools and the leaders . . . I think that's key. I think they've built a level of trust with us so that we're free to just share what's going on in our schools, what's going on that's affecting our growth or our development in ways that don't leave us vulnerable but allow us to take a risk. I think they're good at creating psychological safety around the principals and the partners that they care for and it helps us to just really open up and grapple with some of the real challenges that we face on a day-to-day basis.
>
> —Administrator, school

The school administrator interviewed for this study surfaced many important ideas in our conversation. First the administrator described the current context and climate surrounding school improvement and its potential impact on the relationships between school leaders. In many ways, as described by the interviewee, policies and practices rooted in accountability may actually reinforce silos and discourage communication and collaboration among schools. Second, the administrator described how engaging in partnership provides schools access to resources and social capital—"provides more force, more understanding, more knowledge, more skills, more

energy"—to solve problems and address challenges. Third, the administrator mentioned not having training in partnership work, yet having a core belief in the importance of it taking a village. Finally, the administrator described relationships between the school and its partners that include shared purpose, trust, and values. The interviewee attributed part of the willingness to engage in the community of practice to the meaningful relationships DSNI built and the level of trust the organization engendered. This school leader represented a school on the higher end of each social network centrality measures among schools. Thus, the interviewee's perspective may be from that of a successful engagement in the initiative. Unfortunately, I did not have the ability to interview other school leaders in the initiative to determine where and how perspectives may differ for schools at various levels of communication and collaboration within BPI.

As mentioned above, the interviews surfaced the complexity of engaging schools in social partnerships. As I analyzed the data a question started to form in my head: What is the ideal structure for schools within a social partnership? Although this was not part of my interview protocol, it was clear that interviewees were already considering this question, or even formulating the answer to this question. For instance, as two respondents noted, more connections are not always better:

> More quality, mutually supportive, and beneficial connections are better. More connections in general are not.
>
> —Board member, education services organization

> That's the other piece, is that partnerships just to have a lot of partnerships . . . they have to be meaningful, shared outcomes, long-term, sustainable.
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization

A third interviewee dug into the idea with more detail:

> Promise kind of force-fit education and a few other elements into this. But I think DSNI has always had a theory of change that while education was important, there are a lot of elements of community strength and community capacity that have to be built to make education strong. . . . So, the question is, what can a community-based organization do to make schools more powerful? And I would hazard to say that from a teaching and learning standpoint, there may be a limited set of things that organizations like DSNI can do. But you start to reach this fringe at the boundary of the school that has to do with family stability, non-academic supports, and a number of other things. And in fact, DSNI and other community organizations do a lot better than schools ever will. So, what is the sweet spot between providing schools direct supports and making supports around the school that much more powerful? Where's the coordination sweet spot between working directly with the school and coordinating with the assets around the school? And what is DSNI's role? Is it as a broker? Is it direct intervention? Is it resource conduit? I think it's had to be a lot of different things, and I don't know if there is an easy answer to the question "what should it be?"
>
> —Public official, social and human services organization

Although complete answers to the questions posed by this interviewee cannot be determined in the current research study, two examples were described that begin to address this topic. The first relates to DSNI's role as a broker in the initiative. As described above, the school administrator interviewed for this research highlighted DSNI's ability to convene a principal community of practices and connect leaders from across schools on common challenges. Interviewees also described DSNI's brokering roles in additional ways for other schools in the network as well. They state:

> It wouldn't surprise me that there are fewer ties between [a particular school] and the rest of the network because their relationship to [BPI] is almost exclusively through DSNI.
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization

> When places already had resources for schools and, for whatever reason, there was some barrier to them . . . we had people that had grants that were like, "I'm supposed to be working with this school and I can't figure out how to work with them." Then, providing technical assistance, relationship development, sort of feeling it out both ways, there is a certain amount of that. But again, I'm not trying to be a gatekeeper and I'm also not trying to match-make when it's not a genuine fit, and so I think one of the key things around BPI and around DSNI both, is everyone can be a partner, but if you're really committed to the neighborhood, committed to the schools, you have to walk the walk.
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization

> My understanding is that DSNI helped lead the coordination of the partners because [Principal] didn't have the bandwidth to do it. And I think that's what you see here. To a certain extent, they've also been able to do the same thing with [Principal]. So, what is there here and here that really needs to be replicated here, here, and here?"
>
> —Executive director, education services organization

> You'd think something like [particular social and human services organization], which is a very large institution in Boston, would be closer to the center and have more ties, but we're working a lot with the schools. So, maybe that reflects the fact that [same organization] doesn't do a lot of work into the schools, and Promise is a way of getting them into the mix so to speak.
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization

These interviewees describe situations in which DSNI acts as a bridge or broker for schools in the neighborhood. In some cases, such as the first three quotes illustrates, DSNI works closely with the schools to help support the management of partners. Conversely, as illustrated by the last quote, DSNI can survey the broader environment and connect resources to schools. By nature of DSNI being so central, perhaps schools

and other large service providers can be more peripheral and still be afforded the benefits of the network.

A second example that was discussed by multiple interviewees was an initiative focused on housing stability for student and their families:

> I think one of the clever things that they thought about is No Child Goes Homeless. I think it's at the right intersection between school and community. It's not too deep into the school building as to be trying to engineer change at the teacher and school leader level, but it is taking advantage of the information that schools have. It is taking advantage of what schools know about students and families to figure out how to improve life beyond the school door, which has implications for school performance and school success.
>
> —Public official, social and human services organization

No Child Goes Homeless is a partnership between three schools and two social and human service organizations. Training is provided for staff and school partners on issues of student homelessness, the difficulties associated with transitional living circumstances, and ways to support students and families. Organizational staff meet with schools regularly to discuss potential referrals for families experiencing housing instability. Initiatives like No Child Goes Homeless, at least according to a few interviewees, may be a beneficial scope, role, and structure for collaboration with schools.

Finally, it is important to note that two issues surfaced that represent a disconnect between the social network data and the interview data. First, two interviewees were surprised at the number of communication and collaboration ties with one of the schools. Both interviewees were surprised with how few connections this school had, given what they know about the school and its principal. For example, one interviewee stated:

> [Principal] is very collaborative. So, I'm really surprised that they're that small. Really, really surprised.

—Board member, education services organization

It is unclear why these two interviewees' perceptions of this school were different than the social network findings, but it is worthy of including as a possible limitation of this research. As mentioned above, another issue that seemed problematic in the data was around DSNI's role in facilitating a community of practice. According to multiple interviewees, DSNI facilitated a community of practice among school principals that discussed issues ranging from transportation to enrollment. However, the social network analysis revealed very few communication and collaboration ties between schools. Although the exact reasons for the discrepancies in this research could not be determined, they are worth noting as limitations.

Sustaining Network Structures Beyond the Grant Period

The final theme that surfaced for how the network structures may impact efforts at educational and community change focused on the resiliency of the network structures to sustain beyond the Promise Neighborhoods grant period. This finding relates closely to one of primary goals of Promise Neighborhoods: developing a local infrastructure of systems and resources. Again, interview respondents viewed the dense networks of communication and collaboration as a success of BPI and a strength of DSNI. However, nearly all interviewees (9 out of 11) expressed a concern about how the structures of communication and collaboration would be sustained without the BPI funding. For example, a few illustrative quotes included:

> Let's face it, without the funding, will they still have the ability to bring us all together and facilitate this work and have a person who organizes it and gets the word out to everybody? Because that's a job in of itself.
>
> —Administrator, school

> I'm kind of interested in what BPI's thoughts are about what happens when the money goes away. The problem is once the staff are gone, if you can't keep the staff, then who's driving the work?
>
> —Executive director, social and human services organization

> I think that part of the challenge is what they're going to do when there isn't any money. Because they've built systems that are going to be hard to maintain without it . . . so, what does that mean? If you're talking about changing the system and building one, and you've done it only because the money allowed you to do it, now what?"
>
> —Executive director, education services organization

As described throughout the section answering my first research question, interview respondents described the networks of communication and collaboration as being reflective of DSNI's long history of community change work in the neighborhood. BPI provided an opportunity to leverage and build on the existing relationships and create new connections. However, there is trepidation about what will happen to the networks when the Promise Neighborhoods funding ends, and whether or not the networks could sustain this change. Many of the concerns expressed above relate to the organizational capacity to facilitate and manage collaboration, specifically, the staff required to run the initiative. There is uncertainty among the interview participants if the staffed positions of the initiative will continue to exist.

A few interviewees, however, expressed their beliefs that aspects of the network are resilient and will continue after the formal Promise Neighborhood grand period. For instance, a few interview respondents discuss:

> There are aspects of the network that are resilient . . . It's fairly resilient and can respond to a few different things.
>
> —Public official, social and human services organization

> We are really committed to working closely with DSNI. If BPI goes away, I mean we know the funding is going away, but even if [BPI] stops being talked about in the neighborhood we would continue to work with DSNI.
>
> —Director, social and human services organization

> Through the relationship-building—even though there's not money to fund anyone, there's people who are going to keep partnering and things like that, so the relationships have definitely lasted.
>
> —Director, education services organization

> I think that some of the key pieces around partnerships . . . So, how can we in sustainable ways build partnerships, and how can we ensure that they're sustainable? We have some pieces of that that are being built.
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization

The resiliency of the network structures to sustain beyond the Promise Neighborhoods grant period may impact efforts at educational and community change. The Promise Neighborhoods program relies on developing a local infrastructure of systems and resources as a core component of the work. While the funding was instrumental in creating the capacity to set up the structures, were the structures set up in a way that can sustain the retreat of federal funding? One key component of this is whether or not dedicated staff will be able to continue the work associated with connecting and coordinating communication and collaboration among partners.

Summary

In this section I outlined findings from my second research question: "How might these social network structures impact efforts at educational change?" Data analysis revealed four interconnected themes. First, interviewees highlighted DSNI's effectiveness

at convening and connecting partners, as illustrated by the number of communication and collaboration connections in the sociograms. Interviewees pointed to DSNI's history in the neighborhood, their knowledge of existing partners and programs, and their identity as a mission-driven, resident-led organization. Second, interviewees described how the networks of communication and collaboration allow for access to network resources and social capital—such as knowledge, expertise, and funding—that may not otherwise be available. Third, interviewees expanding on the social network findings to describe the complex nature of engaging with schools in partnership, recognized both the challenges and opportunities in partnering with schools. Lastly, although interviewees saw the dense networks of communication and collaboration as a success, there was palpable concern that these structures may not be resilient when BPI funding ends. Although a few hopeful interviewees were committed to continuing their organizations' participation and building relationships, the concern was consistent. In the next section, I will use the qualitative data to describe network processes that surfaced as important to interviewees in terms of affecting efforts at community and educational change.

Research Question 3

In this section I will present the findings related to my third research question: "What network processes surface as important for the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of impacting efforts at educational and community change?" These findings are drawn from the qualitative interviews. In analyzing the interview data, two broad themes emerged related to which network processes surfaced. Interviewees described technical processes and cultural process for leading social partnerships as important in order to effect educational and community change.

Table 15

Summary of Research Question 3 Findings

- As the lead organization, DSNI had to attend to technical processes required for initiating and managing a social partnership, including meetings and convenings, staffing, and capacity requirements for being a grant maker.
- DSNI also had to attend to cultural processes needed to step into a new organizational role, which required a process of organizational identity renegotiation that may not have been fully resolved, resulting in challenges to sustaining a shared vision.

Technical Processes for Leading Social Partnerships

The first broad category of processes that interviewees described as being important related to the technical aspects of leading social partnerships. DSNI engaged in a number of formal and informal activities to facilitate relationship building, including regular meetings, age-group specific work groups, communities of practice, and annual convenings, also called roundtables. In its Promise Neighborhoods implementation grant application, DSNI described how it engaged over 800 neighborhood stakeholders in the planning process for the Promise Neighborhood (DSNI, 2012). DSNI staff leveraged the excitement and participate around the early planning meetings and evolved them into various work groups as the initiative was implemented.

Among the interviewees, over half (6 out of 11) highlighted the meetings, work groups, and annual convenings as effective ways to facilitate communication and collaboration among partner organizations. In the words of a few interviewees:

> There's such strong work that happens in this neighborhood and in the city and so . . . I don't know anything else that was able to draw people in to think together. I mean some of those meetings were some really powerful meetings.
>
> —Director, social and human services organization

That was actually one group that I enjoyed. That was a meeting that I didn't mind going to.

—Director, health and wellness organization

I've been to other [work group] meetings a lot throughout the city, and the one at Dudley feels different. It's more of an equal playing field between everyone, even if there's a facilitator. [At] other ones, the facilitator's more standing up and . . . you would come in and say, "Oh, that's the person in charge," whereas the Dudley one, I think you would walk in and not really know who's running the show, but in a good way.

—Director, education services organization

[At the annual convening it] was so inspiring to see other organizations both from the perspective of those who are getting funding [and] in some cases people who are giving funding, but altogether around how do we make things better for people in the [neighborhood]. . . . We ended up going to [a particular school] after that first [convening]—we connected with people from there.

—Board member, education services organization

You really learned a lot from those [convenings]. Things that were really informative and a good chance to build relationships with others that are doing work that may overlap or that compliments the work that our organization does. But also, it's a challenge though to keep those things going. You kind of hand each other cards and then . . . [shrug].

—Director, social and human services organization

I still go to the [work group] and I don't really need to, and sometimes I wonder why I'm going to those still because it's Monday nights. It's a tough time to be at them. But I go more for personal reasons because I just have relationships with people there, and I do think there's a lot of really good ideas that come from that neighborhood and that group that I can then, hopefully, elevate to the whole city.

—Director, education services organization

Yet beyond the more formal meetings and convenings, communication also surfaced as a challenge, despite the high number of connections illustrated in the sociograms. About half (5 out of 11) of the interviewees described this challenge. Reflections along these lines included:

> Improving their communication would be very beneficial.
>
> —Director, health and wellness organization

> There was more interaction during the planning process. Then I think after things were implemented the partners interacted with DSNI, but I don't think that there was as much. I think I was curious sometimes to know how all of the pieces were falling together. DSNI did a good job of organizing that on their end but there wasn't as much chance for . . . other than the [convening], getting those times to get together to learn about what activities were happening in the schools, stuff like that.
>
> —Director, social and human services organization

> I don't know if there are still working groups, because I think we would be [involved]. I'm trying to think. Am I just naming it something else? No. I don't know that there's anything actively happening with working groups. Because I think we were a part of that quite a while ago.
>
> —Director, social and human services organization

> It's been all the grant, and just my relationship with [BPI staff member]. There was one thing a couple years ago, where they got all the BPI grantees together, and gave us a social media workshop or something. I think at the beginning, there was talk of a lot more things like that. . . . As far as I know, that hasn't happened.
>
> —Executive director, social and human services organization

> I also think that communication piece is something that never got figured out. In terms of, "here's what we're working on, here's what we've accomplished, here's what the next thing is." I just feel like that never got cracked.
>
> —Executive director, education services organization

The interview data suggest that when DSNI facilitated meetings, workgroups, and convenings, interviewees found them to be meaningful. This is very much related to the data that was presented earlier recognizing DSNI's ability to convene and connect and how their ability may lead to access to network resources and social capital that may not otherwise be accessible. However, the process of continually communicating across the network is challenging.

A second aspect of technical processes that surfaced as important is related to initiative staffing. Interviewees highlighted that the grant requirements from the Department of Education and the role of a lead organization within a Promise Neighborhoods program required a significant amount of internal infrastructure building as well as the skills required to play such a role. Five interviewees identified initiative leadership as a strong support, both specifically in terms of the director of the initiative as well as other leadership staff for the initiative. For instance:

> We proposed some things to [BPI staff member] and she was really open. Having someone like that was very positive to the group.
>
> —Director, health and wellness organization

> I'm totally biased because I love, love, love [BPI staff member].
>
> —Board member, education services organization

> I think that that allowed [BPI staff member] to be like, "You know, we're organizers. We're going to do what our residents want. Primary for us is resident-led. Great that that's what your grant wants us to do, but that's not what you

> approved, and so that's not what we're going to do." So, I think it has worked both ways, and that she's been really good at that. . . . I think she's fantastic. I think that she also, because she's been so—strident is not quite the right word, but it's close—about what they needed to do as a grant maker, and how they needed to do that, [it] put her in the position with [the Department of Education], when [BPI staff member] needed to push back, and be like, "No, that's not how we do things here." She had a lot of legs to stand on, because she'd done everything else the right way.
>
> —Executive director, education services organization

Staffing, however, was also identified as a challenge. A number of interviewees (4 out of 11) pointed to the fact that leadership turnover was a challenge for BPI. For instance:

> They had turnover with staff, too, internally, so just all this felt really tough. . . . I think that there was just a lot of changes in staffing that led to some inconsistencies.
>
> —Director, education services organization

> Everybody that worked there from [work group] left, so there was suddenly nobody. There was like an abrupt stop.
>
> —Executive director, social and human services organization

> I think that things are much more stable now, but the revolving leadership door was very challenging. . . . I think at the end of the day, it was [former staff member's] vision, then he left.
>
> —Executive director, education services organization

Social partnerships, and Promise Neighborhoods in particular due to their funding and reporting structure, require a high degree of organizational capacity. For BPI, staffing was sees as both a strength and a challenge. As a strength, interviewees described the high level of competence of BPI staff. As a challenge, interviewees described staff

turnover. In this sense, it makes sense that staffing can be both a strength an opportunity. Unfortunately, it was outside the scope of this research to better understand the reasons for the staff turnover. Another important aspect of DSNI's capacity as a lead organization was the nature of the grant and a shift in organizational practice. As mentioned above, leading a social partnership like Promise Neighborhoods requires the organizational capacity to not only engage partners, but also be in partnership with the Department of Education as a funding agency. By leading BPI, DSNI had to shift aspects of their organizational practice in order to be a grant-maker, a role the organization had not traditionally played in the neighborhood. DSNI received the funding from the Department of Education and then in turn funded other organizations in the neighborhood. In a technical sense, DSNI had never been a grant-making entity before and there seemed to be a learning curve to the grant-making process, as expressed by several interviewees:

> They had never really been funders before, so they were still figuring that piece out. They were really great partners, but they also sometimes had very specific ideas of what this should look like, and so we had to adjust the way we did things more than I've done in other neighborhoods.
>
> —Director, education services organization

> I don't know if this is a limitation, but I think it's important to note that DSNI, which was a community organization, suddenly had to decide who was worthy of getting this money, and who wasn't.
>
> —Executive director, social and human services organization

> [DSNI] had to build a line of capacity to be in a relationship with the federal government. So, compliance, evaluation, and all of that. And I think that was not necessarily well anticipated. . . . It was a new line of business for DSNI. And I

> remember when they determined that they were going to be a re-granter on some things, and I remember [external individual] having to coach them through a few things and help them make some decisions about how they would show up as a grant maker—what the purpose of being a grant maker was going to be. I think [it was] smart in some ways in that it was a way to distribute resources, hopefully strategically, and enrich other organizations. Create the kind of alignment and connective tissue with dollars as the tool. But, again, . . . it meant another line of business. Now you've got to monitor those investments. Now you've got to get reporting back, and check-in, and do whatever else.
>
> —Public official, social and human services organization

> I think that for me, and for DSNI, that the money makes it hard. That sometimes the collaboration is easier in the absence of resources.
>
> —Executive director, education services organization

DSNI staff themselves recognized this shift in organizational practice and the work that went into building the infrastructure required to be a lead organization in a social partnership as a challenge. According to one interviewee:

> I do think that being a "funder," having the funding come to us and then us doing all of the administrative processes around the funding, and around the data collection and use, has been . . . we've had to put a lot of energy into building that infrastructure. And so I think yeah, the capacity of the organization has been an interesting unfolding, in order to be able to do all the functions that we need to do to really support some of those pieces. . . . So, I feel like it was a limitation in that we had to put time and energy into it, but there was the technical assistance to do that.
>
> —Manager, social and human services organization

In some ways, DSNI had to learn how to operate differently than they had previously. Generally, interviewees spoke of this shift as a learning curve. However, there were a few interviewees who described one instance when this had tougher

consequences. For instance, a few interviewees described how this played out for one of the age-specific working groups:

> The BPI focus on data kind of pushed even the [work group] in a direction that was awkward for many of the partners and parents.
>
> —Director, education services organization

> The thing that ruined the [working group] that we've talked about with [DSNI staff members is] because of the BPI grant, two years ago, the shift was basically like, "okay, now this is about how to get data." Suddenly this group that was residents and people that ran organizations, like, barring different classes and educational backgrounds, [we] were all working together, working around building events. Suddenly it was [DSNI staff member] trying to explain to all of us the difference between outputs and outcomes. The fact of the matter is I think my sense is that—I know this is true for us—DSNI is a nonprofit that does real work, so they fucking suck at collecting data, so they're always under the gun because it's a federal grant. Basically, the [work group] got hijacked. . . . We already had goals that we're all working on. We already were maybe meeting those goals. We collected attendance from people. Otherwise, we weren't collecting data about how the [work group] events further your child's school readiness. It became all about that. Within two meetings, we lost all the parent residents.
>
> —Executive director, social and human services organization

> There's a really long enrollment [form] for BPI. We basically refuse to give it to people, because it rubs against our mission and vibe in terms of asking people about their income, asking people about their education. There is one young mom, who I love, and I showed it to her. . . . She was like, "Oh I love these. How poor am I? How Black am I?" We just don't do that in [our organization]. We still give the consent form, basically where parents sign and put their kids' names. Then we have our own form, which is like a page.

—Executive director, social and human services organization

Taking on the role of a lead organization for a Promise Neighborhoods grant required DSNI to shift organizational practices in terms of grant-making processes and data collection. In some cases, this spurred a learning curve in which DSNI, with the help of a few technical assistance providers, learned and applied new practices, increasing their capacity to lead BPI. In other cases, the grant requirements themselves seemed to be at odds with how partners had come to work with each other, as illustrated by the above example. Though some tension is expected, and could certainly be productive, in at least one case it appeared to be disrupt relationship building and trust among organizations.

Cultural Processes for Leading Social Partnerships

In addition to the technical shifts described above regarding DSNI's role as the lead organization, being the lead organization in a social partnership also involved cultural shifts for DSNI. Cultural processes that surfaced focused primarily around negotiating an organizational identity and sustaining a shared vision.

Initiating and managing a social partnership began—though perhaps did not resolve—a process of organizational identity renegotiation. As described throughout this paper and especially highlighted in the above findings, DSNI is a mission-driven organization with a strong history of grassroots community building in the neighborhood. Partners within BPI hold deep respect and appreciation for DSNI's history of work in the neighborhood, their mission of being resident-led, and their ability to build trust within the community. As additional evidence of this, an interviewee stated:

> It's not an afterthought. You know, it's not, "Let's do all this planning and come up with this great program and ooh we should have some residents be part of it."

> It doesn't usually happen that way. I think that everything they do is resident-driven and all the staff buy in to that and because many of them are residents themselves, it's part of who that organization is.
>
> —Director, social and human services organization

However, the implementation of BPI seemed to cause some uncertainty in terms of organizational identity. This uncertainty seemed to manifest in a few ways. First, interviewees expressed some confusion over the difference between DSNI and BPI. A few quotes exemplify this confusion:

> I didn't even realize that there was a separation [between DSNI and BPI]. I see them as one entity. . . . From my understanding, I see them interconnected.
>
> —Director, health and wellness organization

> I think of [DSNI and BPI] interchangeably, and I know that that's really not the case. . . . But I don't think of them as different entities really.
>
> —Board member, education services organization

> The relationship between [BPI] and DNSI continues to befuddle me. I think it befuddles them, although I think less so since [DSNI staff member] came on.
>
> —Executive director, social and human services organization

> I don't think of them as separate. And I think [DSNI] does. I think of Boston Promise Initiative as DSNI.
>
> —Executive director, education services organization

> From where I was sitting, it was pretty indistinguishable, and I wasn't sure what else DSNI was doing, aside from BPI. And BPI was big enough to take on. It was the right synergy. You could imagine a Venn diagram where there is almost 100% of what BPI is doing overlaps with what DSNI is doing. But I wasn't sure what that 10% or 20%, or 30%, I don't know what the proportion was of things that DSNI felt it was charged to do or were part of this mission that are not BPI. So,

> from where I sat, it was one and the same. But I know the organization was struggling with that, at least the leadership was.
>
> —Public official, social and human services organization

Interviewees seemed to have different perspectives on the relationships between DSNI and BPI. In some ways, this confusion may be inconsequential. For instance, one interviewee described their confusion over which logo—DSNI or BPI—to include on a document, which did not end up being significant. However, interviewees spoke of a deeper consequence that involved the core of DSNI's organizational identity. For instance, a number of interview respondents illustrate this point:

> Part of it is an identity issue. I think a larger part of it that is an identity issue is about whether DSNI was on the track to become this mini City Hall in Dudley that coordinated the efforts of other agencies . . . which may have caused it to remove itself or to think about removing itself at one level from more direct action and more direct intervention work. They were trying to glue a lot together, and I remember when [DSNI staff member] first came on, I kind of asked him directly, "What does DSNI want to be at this point?" One of the things that he was wrestling with was that BPI was becoming the identity of the organization, when in fact there are a whole lot of other resident-led things that DSNI was doing. And he certainly didn't consider DSNI to be just be BPI, but in a lot of ways that was what was evolving at real or perceived levels.
>
> —Public official, social and human services organization

> I understood broadly what they were trying to do, but . . . [the focus on education] just always felt kind of out of nowhere because it's not something that they had done before, and then it was all of a sudden a very intense focus on this thing that they were still trying to get expertise around. . . . Even when the work was starting, it seemed like DSNI had focused so much on housing and things like that, and then it was like a sharp turn towards education. I think education's important, but I think a few of us were like, "What's going to happen when the

grant goes away? How is this going to be sustainable?" And just wondering, what were the bigger decisions being made?

—Director, education services organization

My sense is that having $6,000,000 and being in charge of money and who got it dramatically changed DSNI's relationships with community organizations, with schools. I remember talking to [DSNI staff member] about this earlier. It almost felt like DSNI was very separate from the man, and was doing really badass, grassroots work. Then became the man a little bit more. . . . My other sense when we came in is that the [work group] even when we entered it, seems so critical, but also just like different from DSNI's mission. You know, I think when they're about development without displacement housing, they clearly have that on lock kind of. It almost feels like they're trying to jam education into that. My sense is that a lot of that is because of the BPI grant.

—Executive director, social and human services organization

I think that for me, and for DSNI, that the money makes it hard. That sometimes the collaboration is easier in the absence of resources. . . . They're community organizers, they're a land trust, they're the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative. That's who they are. They are not Boston Promise. That is something that is them and others. That hasn't become part of the DNA of DSNI. . . . I think they drifted in running these programs because of the money, and now that the money is going away, they can't figure out how to sustain it because it's not mission-centric. They're about being resident-led. They're not an education organization. They have no desire to be, and that is okay. But I think at the core of things, that's the problem. . . . On the one hand, the grant making is sort of easy not to have to do anymore, right? But in its absence, what are you doing? And that's what I'm waiting to hear from them, what the plan is . . . and I think that's the challenge. I think that they can't sustain work that isn't core to who they are.

—Executive director, education services organization

Interviewees expressed a concern about whether or not DNSI wanted to be so central in the network, and whether or not BPI was in line with DSNI's mission. In some respects, the challenge with identity are operational, for instance, is this the line of work DSNI wants to be in. But interviewees describe this as more than just operational, involving the "DNA" of the organization. This introduces a new tension: on the one hand interviewees described DSNI as being well-positioned to lead a social partnership, and on the other, doing so with BPI was seen in some ways as a departure from their mission. At least from the data in this study, the process of identity negotiation was ongoing and had not been resolved at the time of the interviews. One potential consequence that surfaced as having an impact on efforts at educational and community change was the ability to sustain a shared vision.

> [The goals] feel more programmatic than transformative. So, the challenge is, I don't know that they have that vision anymore. And I don't know why that is. Like, I can't figure out if it's a leadership issue, I can't figure out if it's a financial issue . . . and I think that's the challenge. I think that they can't sustain work that isn't core to who they are.
>
> —Executive director, education services organization

The concern over sustaining the work is tightly connected to the concerns expressed by interviewees about whether or not the communication and collaboration structures could sustain beyond the grant period. The concern, however, goes much deeper than whether or not funding will be available.

Summary

In this section I outlined findings from my third research question: "What network processes surface as important for the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of impacting efforts at educational and community change?" In analyzing the interview data, two broad themes emerged related to which network processes were important in order to

effect educational and community change: the technical and cultural considerations for leading social partnerships. In a technical sense, leading a social partnership requires technical capacities to facilitate communication, coordinate with partner organizations, and interface and comply with funding requirements. In a cultural sense, taking on the leadership role in a social partnership initiated a process of organizational identity renegotiation, in which DSNI was faced with understanding and communicating how BPI was part of its organizational mission. Taken together, taking on the role of a lead organization requires significant considerations in terms of technical and cultural process that may very well impact efforts for educational and community change.

Conclusion

This chapter presents my research findings as organized by my three research questions. To explore the social network structures of the Boston Promise Initiative in terms of interorganizational communication and collaboration, I used survey data to complete a social network analysis of communication and collaboration among partner organizations. I analyzed network connectivity (density) and network centrality (degree, eigenvector, betweenness) to describe the network in detail. Findings illustrated fairly dense networks of communication and collaboration among partner organizations. Organizations communicated and collaborated across social sectors, and every partner in the network was connected in some way. Schools on average tended to have fewer connections to other organizations in the network. Across all measures of centrality used in this research, DSNI was the most central and influential actor in both communication and collaboration networks.

To explore how these social network structures might impact efforts at educational and community change, I used both the social network data and data from interviews with partner organization representatives. Four themes surfaced from the analysis for how the network structures might impact efforts at educational and community change: (a) DSNI was able to convene and connect partners due to their history of work in the neighborhood and their reputation as mission-driven and resident-led; (b) the networks of communication and collaboration allow access to network resources and social capital that are embedded in the network; (c) engaging schools in partnership is a complex process, involving both challenges and opportunities; and (d) sustaining network structures beyond the Promise Neighborhoods grant period is a very real concern.

I used the qualitative interview data to explore which network processes are important for the Boston Promise Initiative to effect educational and community change. In this analysis, two types of processes surfaced: first, technical processes, including facilitating communication, coordinating with partner organizations, and interfacing and complying with funding requirements surfaced as key operational capacities for the lead organization; and second, cultural processes, including negotiating organizational identity and sustaining a shared vision, surfaced as important challenges for supporting efforts for educational and community change.

The next and final chapter concludes this dissertation by discussing these findings in the context of the extant literature and sharing what they illuminate in terms of the effecting functioning of social partnerships. I will also share limitations of this research and topics for future inquiry.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

Social partnerships are being advanced and funded as a strategy for improving educational and community outcomes across the United States (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014; Henig et al., 2015). Policymakers, researchers, and foundations are viewing these partnerships as "instruments of effective policymaking and implementation" (Ansell et al., 2009, p. 717). Research has shown that many of the issues that impact academic and opportunity gaps are related to what Ladson-Billings (2006) called an "education debt," in which the structures and resources necessary to support student learning have not been provided to schools in urban environments. From this perspective, it is imperative that educational reform efforts address community factors that impact student learning (Morgan et al., 2015).

The underlying premise of the U.S. Department of Education's Promise Neighborhoods program, and other similar social partnerships, is that providing access to resources, services, and supports in a comprehensive and coherent manner will have the greatest cumulative effect on educational and community outcomes (Henig et al., 2015). However, there is a lack of research and knowledge about the process of establishing and managing Promise Neighborhoods, particularly in terms of integrating programs across sectors and developing a local infrastructure of systems and resources—two main components of the Promise Neighborhoods program.

This research study focused on the Boston Promise Initiative in order to understand one such social partnership aimed at creating educational and community change through strategic partnership. This study sought to identify and illustrate the social network structures of the Boston Promise Initiative in order to better understand

how connected partner organizations are in terms of communication and collaboration as well as which organizations may wield particularly high or low influence based on their positions within the networks. This study also sought to understand how the network structures and processes might impact efforts at educational and community change.

Discussion

In this section I will discuss the findings described in Chapter 4 in the context of the broader literature on Promise Neighborhoods and social partnerships. First, I will discuss network connectivity and centrality and how my study contributes to the literature on social partnerships. Next, I will discuss the findings in the context of the existing literature on Promise Neighborhoods and share what they illuminate in terms of the effective functioning of social partnerships.

Network Connectivity and Centrality in Social Partnerships

Prior research suggests that both overall network connectivity and the positioning of each organization within a network, or network centrality, are important for understanding the influence that might be conveyed through the network (Lipparini & Lomi, 1999; Provan et al., 2007). For this study, network connectivity refers to whether or not the organizations within the Boston Promise Initiative communicate and collaborate with each other. Understanding network connectivity in terms of communication and collaboration is important because one of the primary goals of the Boston Promise Initiative, as well as social partnerships at large, is to break down organizational silos and spur communication and collaboration across sectors. Regular communication and collaboration have been identified as fundamental indicators of interorganizational relationship strength within a network (Plastrik & Taylor, 2006); can

support the flow of resources within the network, including tacit or complex knowledge (Hansen, 2002; Reagans & McEvily, 2003; Uzzi, 1996); increase joint problem solving (Uzzi, 1997); facilitate coordinated and innovative solutions (Uzzi, 1997); and support trust within the network (Coleman, 1988).

Examining network connectively allowed me to measure the overall level of connectedness among organizations in BPI, in this case using network density as a metric for connectedness. The network density for communication among BPI partner organizations is 0.356, meaning approximately 36% of total possible communication ties have been realized. The network density for collaboration among BPI partner organizations is 0.198, meaning approximately 20% of total possible collaboration ties have been realized. Practically speaking, these density scores are pretty high considering the time and energy it takes to engage in cross-sector communication and collaboration and interview respondents consistently described these high levels of communication and collaboration as a success for the initiative.

Prior research has shown a number of positive impacts of dense networks. For instance, dense networks have the potential to share resources more quickly than less-dense networks, or networks with fewer ties (Scott, 2000); they have been shown to provide increased opportunities for meeting shared goals (Balkundi & Harrison, 2006); and they offer channels in which knowledge, collaborative relationships, and innovation can flow (Song et al., 2007). Conversely, in less-dense networks, actors tend to not be able to exchange ideas and complex knowledge efficiently (Hansen, 1999) and the network may be required to rely on few actors to act as brokers, connecting otherwise disconnected parts of the network (Daly & Finnigan, 2010).

Importantly, higher density does not necessarily indicate an effective or efficient network. Network density is informative but is not in itself a rating of the quality of the network (Greenberg et al., 2017). High levels of density are not always most effective or efficient, particularly considering the increased capacity required by network actors to maintain high levels of communication and collaboration (Provan et al., 2007). For instance, Valente et al. (2007) found that decreased density actual led to a higher adoption of evidence-based practices among partners in a substance abuse prevention coalition. Similarly, Tanjasiri, Tran, Palmer, and Valente (2007) found that a decrease in density occurred as coalition partners were better able to focus efforts on specific goals. Singer and Kegler (2004) argued that different stages of partnership may require different levels of connectivity, in some cases favoring lower density and, in some cases, higher.

Whereas network connectivity examines the network as a whole, network centrality measures describe the relative position an organization occupies in a given network. Prior research on network centrality described how highly central actors have increased influence within a network, due in part to access to resources through multiple channels and the potential to create new relationships that enhance social capital (Stuart, 1998; Tsai, 2001). I used three measures of network centrality—degree, eigenvector, and betweenness—to better understand the potential influence organizations may or may not have in the BPI network.

Degree centrality is simply the number of other organizations each organization is connected to. Degree centrality was an important measure to examine because it allowed me to see how many other partners each organization in BPI is communicating or collaborating with. On average, an organization in this network communicates with

approximately 12.5 other organizations and collaborates with approximately 7 other organizations. The analysis revealed that schools tend to have few communication and collaboration ties with partner organizations in BPI relative to other organizations. Additionally, while there are a few communications ties between schools and health and wellness organizations in the network, there are no collaboration ties between these types of organizations. DSNI has the highest degree centrality for both communication and collaboration. DSNI has communication ties with 34 other organizations and collaboration ties with 25 other organizations. DSNI has 9 more communication ties and 10 more collaboration ties than the organizations with the next-highest scores.

Eigenvector centrality, the second network centrality measure I used, does not solely rely on the number of connections each organization has; rather, it takes into consideration the relative influence of each partner. Although this is not always the case, in this study eigenvector centrality is almost identical to degree centrality in terms of organizational rankings in both the communication and collaboration networks. Consistent with degree centrality for both communication and collaboration, DSNI had the highest eigenvector centrality scores across relationships. Although in many cases eigenvector centrality can reveal different patterns of centrality than degree centrality, in this case, across communication and collaboration networks, degree centrality and eigenvector centrality are nearly identical in terms of network centrality ranking.

Betweenness centrality, the third measure of centrality I used, examines how often a node falls along the shortest path between other nodes. Betweenness is often interpreted as the potential to control what flows through the network. Thus, organizations in strategic locations may have influence over what and how resources flow

to the rest of the network. In the social network literature, brokers are actors that accrue social capital or have a strategic capacity because of their position in the network (Burt, 2005; Gould & Fernandez, 1989; Heaney, 2006). Thus, betweenness centrality refers to how likely an organization is to be a broker or a bridge between any two other organizations. As the lead organization, DSNI has far and away the highest betweenness centrality score for both communication and collaboration. According to Greenberg at al. (2017):

> In community development literature, it has long been argued that neighborhood actors who are able to bridge diverse community allies in organizations similar to their own as well as organizations at broader city, state, and federal levels are better positioned to carry out effective work. (pp. 24–25)

The more any given organization is located on the path between multiple other organizations, the higher the potential for it to control or influence the network interactions. With respect to betweenness centrality, DSNI is again the most central actor across both communication and collaboration networks.

Ansell et al. (2009) described the importance of brokerage within a network as follows: “In order to overcome the conflict that exists between central actors and those on the periphery, reformers must use individuals who are structurally positioned as brokers between reform supporters and reform skeptics to facilitate strategic outreach” (p. 731). The authors argued that strategic brokerage is critical for leveraging the connections within the network to meet strategic goals. However, in the current study, DSNI had significantly higher betweenness centrality scores across the communication and collaboration networks. While some organizations may continue to connect key organizations, much of the brokering responsibility is likely placed squarely on DSNI.

Intuitively, the network centrality measures (degree, eigenvector, betweenness) are similar, however, they each capture a different aspect of network centrality (Valente, 2010). Due to the slight but important differences in calculations, these three measures often identify different actors as being central (Carolan, 2014; Valente, 2010). Nonetheless, in this study, DSNI was identified as the most central actor in each of the measures across both communication and collaboration networks.

Promise Neighborhoods and the Impact of Social Network Structures

Of the research that has been written to date on Promise Neighborhoods, only four articles have been published documenting research on specific initiatives. This study contributes to the literature by exploring the social network structures of one initiative and the ways in which the structure may impact efforts at educational and community change. As described in Chapter 1, two of the foundational Promise Neighborhoods strategies are: "integrating programs and breaking down agency 'silos' so that solutions are implemented effectively and efficiently across agencies" and "developing the local infrastructure of systems and resources needed to sustain and scale up proven, effective solutions across the broader region beyond the initial neighborhood" (U.S. Department of Education, 2018, para. 4). These two aspects of Promise Neighborhoods have yet to be explored in the research, a contribution this research also seeks to offer.

Data analysis revealed four interconnected themes in terms of how communication and collaboration social network structures might impact efforts at educational and community change: DSNI's effective ability to convene and connect partners, generating access to network resources and social capital, the complexity of

engaging schools in partnership, and the challenge of sustaining network structures beyond the grand period.

First, the network sociograms show dense networks of communication and collaboration. All of the formal partner organizations are engaged in some way, though there are a few organizations with few communication and collaboration ties that are potentially at risk for disengaging with the network. Other organizations, however, are deeply engaged. When presented with the sociograms illustrating degree centrality for the communication and collaboration networks, interviewees consistently described the dense networks as a success and a strength of BPI. Interviewees also described DSNI's history in the neighborhood and credibility as a resident-led organization as driving forces behind weaving together such a network. Human and Provan (2000) found that networks that are formally constructed and do not emerge out of previous relationships are more likely to fail than those rooted in previous relationships. Coleman (1988) suggested that the extent to which network actors are connected to each other in a network is related to overall interorganizational trust in the network. According to Bryk and Schneider (2002), "trust is the connective tissue that holds improving schools together" (p. 144). In their 2002 book, *Trust in Schools: A Core Resources for Improvement*, Bryk and Schneider define relational trust among a school community as a key component of effective school improvement. Building trust, according to the authors, includes attributes such as respect, personal regard for others, competence, and integrity. Bryk and Schneider stated: "Trust fosters a set of organizational conditions, some structural and some social-psychological, that make it more conducive for individuals to

initiative and sustain the kinds of activities necessary to affect productivity improvements" (2002, p. 116).

Second, interviewees described the positive impact that getting the right people to the table from across organizations and sectors has had in terms of access to resources that exist within the network, such as knowledge, information, and the expertise of senior organizational leaders. Although a few researchers have examined social capital at the organizational level (e.g. McGrath et al., 2003; Song et al., 2007; Tenkasi & Chesmore, 2003), Ibarra et al. (2005) provided a definition for communal social capital as "the benefit that accrues to the collectivity as a result of the positive relations between different groups, organization units, or hierarchical levels" (p. 116). By facilitating communication and collaboration channels, DSNI provided access to network resources and social capital that may not have been otherwise available, increasing the potential for benefits across the network.

Third, an aspect of the sociograms that stood out to interviewees was the peripheral location of the neighborhood schools and their associated centrality scores. Interviewees generally seemed disappointed that the schools were not more central to the network, particularly considering the fact that one of the main goals of the initiative was increasing educational outcomes. Interviewees described the challenges that schools face when trying to engage in partnership, including changes in leadership, competing priorities, and a lack of time. However, interviewees also problematized the findings, arguing that more connections are not necessarily better. Thus, it is not self-evident that schools' location on the periphery of the network negatively impacts efforts at educational and community change. One school leader described the rich connections the

school has made by participating in BPI. In many ways, this brings up more questions than it answers. Is there an ideal location for schools to maximize efforts at educational and community change? How best can partners work at the intersection of schools and communities in ways that don't overburden schools?

Lastly, although interviewees saw the dense networks of communication and collaboration as a success, there was palpable concern that these structures may not be resilient when BPI funding ends. Although a few hopeful interviewees were committed to continuing their organizations' participation and building relationships, the concern was consistent. According to Billett et al. (2007), however, "even when there is a common set of concerns, the process working together is complex and challenging, often contested and requiring new ways of working and in changing circumstances" (p. 638). Even with shared goals in mind, the work of a social partnership is challenging, and many initiatives struggle to accomplish their goals (Kubish et al., 2015; Nowell, 2009).

Technical and Cultural Considerations of Leading Social Partnerships

Both technical and cultural processes were identified as important in order to effect educational and community change. In a technical sense, there is a significant amount of organizational capacity necessary to be the lead organization of a social partnership. DSNI engaged in a number of activities to facilitate relationship building, including regular meetings, age group–specific work groups, communities of practice, and annual convenings, or roundtables. Interviewees highlighted the meetings, work groups, and annual convenings as effective ways to facilitate communication and collaboration among partner organizations. Yet beyond the more formal meetings and convenings, communication surfaced as a challenge, despite the high number of

connections illustrated in the sociograms. Interviewees also highlighted that the requirements from the Department of Education and the role of a lead organization within a Promise Neighborhoods program required a significant amount of internal infrastructure building as well as the skills required to play such a role. Respondents consistently highlighted BPI leadership as a strength. Staffing, however, was also identified as a challenge. Another important aspect of DSNI's capacity as a lead organization was the nature of the grant and a shift in organizational practice. By leading BPI, DSNI became a grant maker, a role the organization had not traditionally played.

The role of a strong lead organization is consistently addressed in the literature (Henig et al., 2015). The lead organization needs to have strong organizational capacity (Evans et al., 2014), sufficient resources (Nowell & Foster-Fishman, 2011), and political influence (Chaskin, 2001). Kania and Kramer (2011) called the lead organization in a social partnership the backbone organization. They argued that creating and managing a social partnership requires an organization with specific skills and capacity:

> The backbone organization requires a dedicated staff separate from the participating organizations who can plan, manage, and support the initiative through ongoing facilitation, technology and communication support, and handling the myriad logistical and administrative details need for the initiative to function smoothly. (p. 40)

The lead organization in a social partnership must be able to attend to and grow their technical capacities when leading a cross-sector initiative.

In addition to the technical processes, the findings from this research also highlight the importance of cultural processes involved in becoming a lead organization for a social partnership. Initiating and managing BPI began—though perhaps did not resolve—a process of organizational identity renegotiation for DSNI. Findings point to

some uncertainty in terms of organizational identity as BPI was implemented. Although DSNI staff interviewed for this project discussed the technical processes of being a lead organization, they did not mention cultural processes—these findings were drawn exclusively from partner organizations. To Pratt (2003), "events that trigger a self-reflective analysis—such as new beginnings, crises, and other changes—should be likely candidates for the importance of identity" (p. 166). At its core, identity involves self-referential meaning (Corley et al., 2006; Pratt, 2003). To Corley et al. (2006), collective identity "refers to those characteristics that members feel are central, enduring, and distinctive" (pp. 168–169). To my knowledge there has not been much research examining organizational identity in the context of social partnerships, it is reasonable to argue that the enduring characteristics of organizations engaged in collaborative work are important. For instance, DSNI has a demonstrated record of 30 years of experience working with residents in the Dudley neighborhood, has a resident-led board of directors, and is employed with many community residents.

By their very nature, social partnerships engage organizations from multiple sectors of society to solve a social problem (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014). According to Waddock (2014), "Collapsing boundaries between sectors, functions, and even organizing purposes have created not only a great need for collaboration skills of all sorts, but also an array of new and emerging types of enterprise" (p. 336). This "new enterprise" requires organizational shifts in both technical and cultural processes to effectively lead social partnerships.

Limitations of the Study

There are limitations of this research study that are worth noting and should be considered when interpreting the findings and conclusions. The first limitation has to do with the study participants and context. In a broader sense, the Boston Promise Initiative is one of many Promise Neighborhoods and one of even more social partnerships. It is likely that each social partnership is unique and operates under varying circumstances, including location, demographics, governance, and funding. I am hopeful that the findings of my study can be informative for other social partnerships; however, because of the small sample size, these findings should not be generalized to all social partnerships. Thus, it is important for future research to continue to examine the process of initiating and managing social partnerships to see how this process plays out in different contexts.

There are four limitations of this research that have to do with social network analysis. First, in determining the sample I chose to use organizational representatives and analyze the data at the organizational level. Although this has been done in previous research (see, e.g., Ansell et al., 2009; Evans et al., 2014), there is the risk that an analysis at the organizational level does not take into consideration all individual perspectives. For instance, other informed individuals would not have had the opportunity to take part in the research if they were not identified as an organizational representative. Second, the social network analysis and associated sociograms represent a snapshot in time. In one case, for instance, an interviewee mentioned that relationships might have changed from the time they took the survey to the time of the interview. Certainly, social networks are dynamic, and I would expect communication and collaboration relationships to shift over

time. However, for the scope of this study I was unable to capture that shifts in network dynamics over time. Thus, findings should be interpreted for that moment in time and should not be assumed to necessarily reflect current relationships.

Third, social network analysis is sensitive to missing data. Although this research had a high response rate and I took steps to deal with missing data consistent with prior research, there could be connections that are not accurately represented in this research. Additionally, although I bound the network intentionally using formal partners in the initiative, this limited the number of organizations present in the network. Certainly, organizations communicate and collaborate with other organizations not accounted for in this analysis. For instance, if schools had strong collaborative relationships with organizations not on the roster, those ties would not have shown up in this study. For example, the school leader I interviewed described a partnership with a local dentist and a local optometrist, practitioners that were not identified as formal partners in BPI.

Fourth, I chose to assume reciprocity in the relationships between organizations as one way to resist the threat of missing data. However, I think it is fair to say that often times communication and collaboration is asymmetrical among organizations. Prior research has also identified a potential threat called *prestige effect*, in which actors with lower status name actors with higher status (Laumann, 1966). This may have resulted in higher density within the networks and elevated centrality scores for some organizations.

Next, it became clear to me in the follow-up interviews that communication and collaboration mean different things to different people. I chose not to include follow-up questions about either the frequency or depth of the relationships, in order to limit

respondent burden. However, such follow-up questions would have allowed me to do a more detailed analysis.

Finally, though I took intentional steps to account for the potential impact of my personal perspective on the research findings, I recognize that I still have a number of blind spots. It is certainly a limitation of this research that much of the data analysis and writing was done independently without a research team offering multiple perspectives. Thus, particularly due to the way that I have curated the findings, there is a risk that I was not able to step out of my worldview, perspective, and privilege in a way that others may have been able to do.

I took the above limitations into consideration when presenting my findings and conclusions. It is likely that there may be other possible factors that were overlooked during data collection and analysis. Although I do not believe these limitations significantly affected my research results, they are important to consider when interpreting and applying the findings.

Topics for Further Inquiry

The results of this study indicate a need for more thorough understandings of initiating and managing social partnerships. I have identified four topics for further inquiry based on the results of this study. First, as described above as a limitation to this research, I was only able to study communication and collaboration within a social partnership at one point in time. Research is needed that examines how communication and collaboration may evolve over time as social partnerships are initiated and implemented. For instance, I learned from the interviewees that they believed that DSNI was in a good position to manage an initiative like BPI because of the organization's long

history in the neighborhood, its existing relationships with other organizations, and its reputation as a mission-driven organization that prioritizes the community. It would have been interesting to administer and analyze the social network survey at multiple points throughout the grant period. By doing so, I might have been better able to discern how certain practices contributed to robust networks of communication and collaboration. Additionally, there was a concern that the network structures may not be resilient enough to continue after the end of BPI finding. It also would be interesting to administer the survey a year after the grant ends to determine if the relationships remained intact.

Second, this research provided detailed analyses of the network structure of BPI. However, research is needed that examines network structures across social partnerships as well as tied to partnership outcomes, to begin to determine if there are more ideal structures than others. For instance, are some network structures more effective than others at creating educational and community change? Is there an ideal structure that engages schools in a way that does not overburden them? Research that analyzes structures across contexts, and ties these structures to outcomes, would be valuable for supporting future social partnerships. Such studies are critical to making substantive advances in our understanding of how partnerships should be structured to increase impact.

Third, further attention is needed to better understand the ways in which lead organizations can increase their capacity to initiate and manage social partnerships. More research is needed to understand what is required of lead organizations and how organizations can be better supported to take on such responsibilities. For instance, research is needed on specific practices that organizations can engage in to better

facilitate communication and collaboration among partner organizations. As described in this research, although the communication network was dense, partner organizations still described communication as a challenge. Identifying effective ways to facilitate authentic communication seems key for organizations engaging in this work, and more research is needed to explore this topic.

Finally, this research highlighted the potential tension in organizational identity that may arise as an organization steps into the role of a lead organization. Although BPI was still mission-centric to DSNI, taking on the role of a backbone organization in a cross-sector collaborative forced DSNI to operate in ways that were new to the organization—for instance, taking on the role of grant maker. According to Pratt (2003), "events that trigger a self-reflective analysis—such as new beginnings, crises, and other changes—should be likely candidates for the importance of identity" (p. 166). As many interviewees expressed, BPI triggered tension in DSNI's organizational identity. DSNI is one of many backbone organizations leading social partnerships. To my knowledge there has not been research examining organizational identity in the context of social partnerships, yet it is reasonable to argue that it is important to understand more fully the enduring characteristics of organizations engaged in collaborative work.

These lines of inquiry would help build an understanding of social partnerships and, importantly, inform current and future initiatives aimed at addressing social problems through collective action.

Conclusion

The challenges facing our communities are complex, interconnected, and urgent (Kania & Kramer, 2011). Recognizing this, policy makers, funders and practitioners are

turning to social partnerships as a promising strategy for community and educational change (Bess, 2015; Henig et al., 2015). Social partnerships involve the joining together of organizations from across sectors of society to tackle social problems (Crane & Seitanidi, 2014). One type of social partnership is the Promise Neighborhoods program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The underlying premise of Promise Neighborhoods is that providing access to resources, services, and supports in a comprehensive and coherent manner will have the greatest cumulative effect on educational and community outcomes (Horsford & Sampson, 2014; U.S. Department of Education, 2018).

In a local sense, my hope from the beginning of this study is that the research process itself could be a learning opportunity for DSNI and their partners in BPI. My hope, which has been justified in the literature (see e.g., Cross et al., 2002), was that by examining the networks of communication and collaboration, DSNI and their partners could reflect on the relationships and, perhaps, shift practice if necessary to further engage with key partners. The evidence from this study show that DSNI was well-positioned to lead an initiative like BPI due to its long history of community engagement in Dudley and their ability to convene and connect community residents and partners. The networks that DSNI facilitated for BPI provided access to network resources and social capital that may not have otherwise been available to organizations in the network. Additionally, DSNI was connected to every school in the community, and in many ways brokered relationships that may possibly impact educational change. In a technical sense, DSNI was well-situated to manage a social partnership in terms of convening and connecting partners. DNSI also had a learning curve as they took on organizational

processes and practices that were unfamiliar, such as that of being a grant-maker. The findings also point to concern over whether or not the communication and collaboration structures built for BPI could sustain the end of the Promise Neighborhoods grant, with the greatest concerns being about whether or not DSNI would be able to maintain the staffing necessary to lead such work in the future.

In a broader sense, this study further illuminates the complex nature of social partnerships for impacting education and community change. Although I have been careful not to generalize too broadly given the unique nature of different social partnerships, there are a number of key takeaways I think are appropriate for policy makers, researchers, and practitioners that are viewing social partnerships as "instruments of effective policymaking and implementation" (Ansell et al., 2009, p. 717).

First, social network analysis offers an effective way to measure interorganizational relationships within a social partnership. While the network data were informative on their own, the data were much more informative in relation to the qualitative data. For instance, the network data showed schools as a sector to be less connected than other sectors on average. However, the interview data uncovered the complexity in a way that the network data could not have. In the future, social partnerships could benefit from leveraging social network analysis at multiple points in their functioning. Many interviewees in this research began to brainstorm possible engagement strategies while reflecting on the sociograms. Although it was outside the scope of this research, it would have been interesting to use the sociograms to strategically plan with partner organizations and to continually assess interventions aimed at engagement.

Second, the amount of time, energy, and expertise required to lead a social partnership should not be underestimated. As illustrated in full list of Promise Neighborhoods grantees, (see Appendix A), the organizations positioning themselves to be lead organizations for social partnerships are very diverse, from institutions of higher education, to community-based organizations, to foundations. The organizations certainly have many of the technical capacities necessary to lead a social partnership, but it is unlikely that they have all of the necessary capacities. This means that lead organizations will need to, in one sense or another, expand their capacity from the beginning. This could potentially occur through technical assistance, hiring new staff, or learning as they go. Organizational learning will need to continue well through implementation as well. For grants like Promise Neighborhoods that are five years in length, the time is limited for making substantive changes on complex issues.

Third, although there has been research and technical support on the technical processes of leading social partnership, the cultural processes involved with being a lead organization have largely been overlooked. The findings from this research highlight the importance of attending to these cultural processes, and in particular, considering how the role of a lead organization should include intentional conversations to negotiate what the role and responsibilities might mean for organizational identity.

Finally, what I have learned through this research further justifies a finding presented by Horsford and Sampson (2014). Horsford and Sampson purport that communities require a fundamental level of capacity in order to even be considered for an opportunity like Promise Neighborhoods. In a similar sense, the findings from this research demonstrate that by most accounts DSNI was well-positioned to lead a social

partnership due to their history in place-based change efforts, the trust they build with the residents in the community, and their ability to convene and connect senior leaders from partner organizations. Yet, DSNI faced a number of challenges to implementing and managing a social partnership. A significant amount of resources and support will be required to engage in similar work in neighborhoods that do not yet have a foundation of partnerships like BPI.

Research on initiating and managing a social partnership remains limited, especially when considering the diversity of contexts and participants within these partnerships. By better understanding the structure and processes inherent in organizing and maintaining a social partnership, funders, technical support providers, and organizations themselves can be better informed as they develop and implement social partnership for educational and community change.

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Appendix A

Full List of Promise Neighborhoods Grant Awards

Year of Award	Grantee	Project title	Duration	Year 1	Total	City	State
2010	Abyssinian Development Corporation	Harlem Promise Neighborhood	1	$471,740	$471,740	New York	NY
2010	Amherst H. Wilder Foundation	St. Paul's Promise Neighborhood	1	$500,000	$500,000	St. Paul	MN
2010	Athens-Clarke County Family Connection Inc.	Athens-Clarke County Promise Neighborhood Initiative	1	$500,000	$500,000	Athens	GA
2010	Berea College	Improving Rural Appalachian Communities	1	$500,000	$500,000	Jackson	KY
2010	Boys & Girls Club of the Northern Cheyenne Nation	Northern Cheyenne Nation Promise Neighborhood	1	$499,679	$499,679	Northern Cheyenne Reservation	MT
2010	California State University East Bay	Hayward Promise Neighborhoods Partnership	1	$499,406	$499,406	Hayward	CA

2010	Cesar Chavez Public Policy Charter High School	DC Promise Neighborhoods Initiative	1	$500,000	$500,000	Washington	DC
2010	Community Day Care Center of Lawrence, Inc.	Arlington Community of Excellence	1	$500,000	$500,000	Lawrence	MA
2010	Delta Health Alliance, Inc.	The Delta Promise Neighborhood Project	1	$332,531	$332,531	Indianola	MS
2010	Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative	Boston's Promise Initiative	1	$500,000	$500,000	Boston	MA
2010	Lutheran Family Health Centers/Lutheran Medical Center	Sunset Park Promise Neighborhood	1	$498,614	$498,614	New York	NY
2010	Morehouse School of Medicine, Inc.	Atlanta's Promise Neighborhoods	1	$500,000	$500,000	Atlanta	GA
2010	Neighborhood Centers Inc.	Gulfton Promise Neighborhood	1	$500,000	$500,000	Houston	TX
2010	Proyecto Pastoral at Dolores Mission	Boyle Heights Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood	1	$499,524	$499,524	Los Angeles	CA
2010	The Guidance Center	River Rouge Promise Neighborhoods Initiative	1	$500,000	$500,000	River Rouge	MI

2010	United Way of Central Massachusetts, Inc.	Main South Promise Neighborhoods Partnership	1	$456,308	$456,308	Worcester	MA
2010	United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County	Eastside Promise Neighborhood	1	$312,000	$312,000	San Antonio	TX
2010	Universal Community Homes	Universal Promise Neighborhood Initiative	1	$500,000	$500,000	Philadelphia	PA
2010	University of Arkansas at Little Rock	Central Little Rock Promise Neighborhood	1	$430,098	$430,098	Little Rock	AR
2010	Westminster Foundation	Buffalo Promise	1	$500,000	$500,000	Buffalo	NY
2010	Youth Policy Institute	Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood	1	$500,000	$500,000	Los Angeles	CA
2011	Berea College	Improving Rural Appalachian Schools	5	$5,993,546	$28,421,845	Jackson	KY
2011	Black Family Development	Detroit's Osborn/Clark Park Promise Neighborhoods	1	$500,000	$500,000	Detroit	MI
2011	California State University, East Bay Foundation	Hayward Promise Neighborhood	5	$3,964,289	$23,554,891	Hayward	CA
2011	CAMBA, Inc.	Flatbush Promise Neighborhood Initiative	1	$500,000	$500,000	New York	NY

2011	Campo Band of Mission Indians	All of Us Moving Forward	1	$168,634	$168,634	Campo	CA
2011	Catholic Diocese Albany	Greater Hudson Promise Neighborhood	1	$413,145	$413,145	Hudson	NY
2011	Children Youth and Family Services	City of Promise	1	$470,259	$470,259	Charlottesville	VA
2011	Community Action Project of Tulsa	Tulsa Promise Neighborhood	1	$500,000	$500,000	Tulsa	OK
2011	Martha O'Bryan Center	Nashville Promise Neighborhood	1	$500,000	$500,000	Nashville	TN
2011	Mercer University	Macon Children's Promise Neighborhood	1	$499,980	$499,980	Macon	GA
2011	Meriden Children First	Meriden Family Zone	1	$465,635	$465,635	Meriden	CT
2011	Mission Economic Development Agency	Mission Promise Neighborhood	1	$500,000	$500,000	San Francisco	CA
2011	Northside Achievement Zone	Northside Achievement Zone	5	$5,664,925	$27,203,167	Minneapolis	MN
2011	Ohio University	Promise Neighborhood Trimble	1	$468,146	$468,146	Glouster	OH
2011	Reading and Beyond	Fresno Promise Neighborhood	1	$484,678	$484,678	Fresno	CA
2011	SGA Youth and Family Services	Roseland Children's Initiative	1	$500,000	$500,000	Chicago	IL

2011	South Bay Community Services	Chula Vista Promise Neighborhood	1	$500,000	$500,000	Chula Vista	CA
2011	Thomas and Jeanne Elmezzi Foundation	Zone 126 Promise Neighborhood	1	$500,000	$500,000	New York	NY
2011	United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County	San Antonio Eastside Promise Neighborhood	5	$4,364,141	$22,455,748	San Antonio	TX
2011	Westminster Foundation	Buffalo Promise Neighborhood	5	$1,499,500	$4,422,847	Buffalo	NY
2012	CASA de Maryland, Inc.	Langley Park Promise Neighborhood	1	$500,000	$500,000	Langley Park	MD
2012	Center for Family Services, Inc.	Camden Copper Lanning Promise Neighborhood	1	$499,654	$499,654	Camden	NJ
2012	Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation	Cypress Hills Promise Neighborhood	1	$371,222	$371,222	Brooklyn	NY
2012	DC Promise Neighborhood Initiative, Inc.	Five Promises for Two Generations	5	$1,967,748	$26,531,898	Washington	DC
2012	Delta Health Alliance, Inc.	Indianola Promise Community	5	$5,997,093	$28,444,083	Indianola	MS
2012	Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative	Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative	5	$1,485,001	$5,742,935	Boston	MA

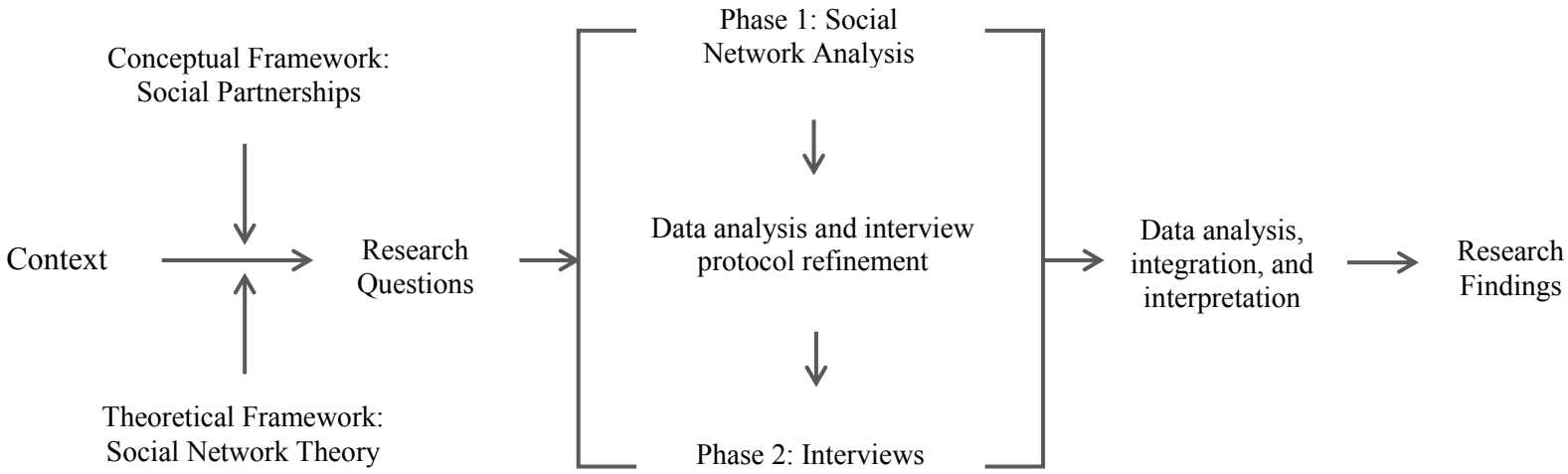
2012	Mid-Iowa Community Action, Inc.	Rogers Promise Neighborhood Project	1	$495,984	$495,984	Marshalltown	IA
2012	Mission Economic Development	Mission Promise Neighborhood	5	$6,000,000	$23,048,019	San Francisco	CA
2012	Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians	The Everett Freeman Initiative	1	$499,766	$499,766	Corning	CA
2012	Penquis C.A.P., Inc.	Many Flags Promise Neighborhoods	1	$348,169	$348,169	Bangor	ME
2012	Renewal Unlimited, Inc.	Adams County Promise Neighborhood Initiative	1	$499,997	$499,997	Portage	WI
2012	Rutgers, The State University	Newark Fairmount Promise Neighborhood	1	$498,772	$498,772	Newark	NJ
2012	South Bay Community Services	Chula Vista Promise Neighborhood	5	$4,998,609	$26,369,368	Chula Vista	CA
2012	Texas Tech University College of Education	East Lubbock Promise Neighborhood	5	$3,263,789	$22,768,109	Lubbock	TX
2012	United Way of Northern Utah	Ogden United for Promise Neighborhoods	1	$498,301	$498,301	Ogdon	UT
2012	University of Maryland, Baltimore	Promise Heights	1	$499,735	$499,735	Baltimore	MD
2012	Youth Policy Institute	Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood	5	$6,000,000	$28,453,572	Los Angeles	CA
2016	Berea College	Knox Promise Neighborhood	5	$6,000,000	$30,000,000	Berea	KY

2016	Center for Family Services	Camden Promise Neighborhood Implementation	5	$6,000,000	$30,000,000	Camden	NJ
2016	Delta Health Alliance	Deer Creek Promise Neighborhood	5	$5,999,980	$29,998,012	Indianola	MS
2016	Drexel University	Promise of a Strong Partnership for Education Reform (ProSPER)	5	$5,999,814	$29,993,058	Philadelphia	PA
2016	Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians	The Everett Freeman Promise Neighborhood Initiative	5	$2,705,168	$14,857,240	Corning	CA
2016	Youth Policy Institute	Los Angeles Promise Neighborhood in the Promise Zone	5	$6,000,000	$30,000,000	Los Angeles	CA

Note. "Complete List of Promise Neighborhoods Grants," U.S. Department of Education, December 20, 2016. Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/programs/promiseneighborhoods/awards.html.

Appendix B

Research Design Map



Based on Creswell and Plano Clarke's (2006) explanatory model

Appendix C

BPI Partner Survey Items

This survey was created and administered online through Qualtrics. The questions shown below are the same, but the structure and question presentation was different online.

Organizational Background Information

Please select your organization.
[List of organizations]

If your organization is not listed, what is the name of your organization?
[Open response]

What is your current role within this organization?
[Open response]

How many years have you been with this organization?
[Open response]

How long have you personally been involved with the Boston Promise Initiative?
[Less than 1 month / 1-6 months / 6 months to 1 year / 1-2 years / Longer than 2 years]

With which working groups, if any, do you participate? (Check all that apply)
[List of working groups]

How much funding, if any, has your organization received through the Boston Promise Initiative?
[Open response]

Please describe your current and past experience with the Boston Promise Initiative.
[Open response]

Organizational Interactions

For this next section, please do your best to answer from the perspective of your organization as a whole. In this section, we are mainly interested in how organizations are interacting.

On the next page you will find a list of BPI partner organizations. Your organization may interact with some of them quite frequently and others not at all. By hearing about who your organization interacts with, we can better understand patterns of communication and collaboration within BPI.

Please check as many or as few organizations as appropriate.

With whom, if anyone, has your organization communicated about issues broadly related to the Boston Promise Initiative, for instance through email, meetings, or informal conversations? Select all that apply.

[List of organizations]

Are there any other organizations not listed above with whom your organization communicates about the Boston Promise Initiative?

[Open response]

With whom, if anyone, has your organization worked with to create some sort of deliverable, for instance a grant application, event, project, etc.? Select all that apply.

[List of organizations]

Are there any other organizations not listed above with whom your organization collaborates about the Boston Promise Initiative?

[Open response]

With whom, if anyone, would your organization like to work more closely with on issues related to the Boston Promise Initiative? Select all that apply.

[List of organizations]

Are there any other organizations not listed above with whom your organization would like to work more closely on issues related to the Boston Promise Initiative?

[Open response]

For the rest of the survey, please do your best to answer for you as an individual, rather than for your organization.

BPI Feedback

Please indicate the extent to which you think participation in the Boston Promise Initiative has impacted…Your organization / Your personal work / Dudley community residents

[To a great extent / Some / A little / Not at all]

How well do you feel like you understand the goals of BPI?

[Very well / Well / Neither well nor poorly / Poorly]

How effective do you think the Boston Promise Initiative is at working towards its goals?

[Very effective / Somewhat effective / Somewhat ineffective / Very ineffective]

How effective do you think the Boston Promise Initiative has been at creating a shared vision for change?

[Very effective / Somewhat effective / Somewhat ineffective / Very ineffective]

How effective do you think the Boston Promise Initiative has been at creating a shared measurement system for utilizing data?
[Very effective / Somewhat effective / Somewhat ineffective / Very ineffective]

How effective do you think the Boston Promise Initiative has been at facilitating communication among partner organizations?
[Very effective / Somewhat effective / Somewhat ineffective / Very ineffective]

How effective do you think the Boston Promise Initiative has been at facilitating collaboration among partner organizations?
[Very effective / Somewhat effective / Somewhat ineffective / Very ineffective]

Overall, how well do you think the Boston Promise Initiative is performing?
[Very well / Well / Neither well nor poorly / Poorly]

Do you have any comments about how well you think BPI is performing?
[Open response]

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
I believe BPI has adequate financial resources to reach its goals.
I believe BPI has adequate know-how and expertise to reach its goals.
I believe BPI has adequate relationships with outstanding partners to reach its goals.
I believe DSNI has adequate organizational capacity to support BPI in reaching its goals.
[Strongly agree / Somewhat agree / Somewhat disagree / Strongly disagree]

How satisfied are you working with the Boston Promise Initiative?
[Very satisfied / Satisfied / Dissatisfied / Very dissatisfied]

Do you have any comments about your level of satisfaction working with BPI?
[Open response]

If you have your own way, will you be working with the Boston Promise Initiative three years from now?
[Yes / No]

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
The values of all members who participate in the initiative are similar.
Members have strongly held beliefs about what is important within the initiative.
Members have similar goals for the initiative.
All members agree on what is important to the initiative.
[Strongly agree / Somewhat agree / Somewhat disagree / Strongly disagree]

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

If someone were to criticize the Boston Promise Initiative it would feel like a personal insult.
I am very interested in what others think about the Boston Promise Initiative.
When I talk about BPI I usually say "we" rather than "they."
Boston Promise Initiative's successes are my successes.
What someone praises BPI it feels like a personal compliment.
If a story in the media criticized BPI I would feel embarrassed.
[Strongly agree / Somewhat agree / Somewhat disagree / Strongly disagree]

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
I am quite proud to be able to tell people I am part of the Boston Promise Initiative.
What BPI stands for is important to me.
I believe BPI is unable to accomplish its mission.
I feel a strong sense of belonging to BPI.
I feel like "part of the family" at BPI.
The people I work with at BPI don't really care about me personally.
[Strongly agree / Somewhat agree / Somewhat disagree / Strongly disagree]

Are there any other experiences you would like to share about your work with the Boston Promise Initiative? If yes, please include them in the space below.
[Open response]

Background Information

Are you a resident of the Dudley neighborhood?
[Yes / No]

Please select your highest degree or level of school completed. (If enrolled, the highest level completed)
[High school / College / Masters / Doctorate]

Please select the gender with which you identify.
[Male / Female / Other]

Please select the race with which you identify. (Check all that apply)
Asian
Black/African American
White
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander
American Indian / Native Alaskan
Other

Please select the ethnicity with which you identify. (Check all that apply)
Cape Verdean
Hispanic / Latino
Caribbean

Other

Would you be willing to potentially participate in a follow-up interview to continue the conversation about participating in the Boston Promise Initiative?

[Yes / No]

Appendix D

Key Informant Interview Protocol

Introduction

Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule to talk to me today. I am a doctoral student at Boston College and I am conducting a study about the Boston Promise Initiative and how social partnerships are engaging in educational and community change. I hope to use what I learn from the interviews, in combination with information from the survey, to understand the process of engaging in a social partnership and to provide the Boston Promise Initiative with information that will hopefully be useful moving forward with the initiative.

Do you have any questions for me? *(Pause and wait for response).* Is it ok if I take record our conversation? *(Pause and wait for response).* Great. Then I am going to turn on the tape recorder and ask you again if it is ok if I tape record our conversation.

Background Information

I'd like to start by learning more about your current work. Can you describe your organization briefly?

- What is your specific role within this organization?
- What are the responsibilities you have in this role?
- How long have you worked in this capacity?

How did you first come to learn about the Boston Promise Initiative?

- What were your initial thoughts about BPI?

Can you describe your experience with BPI since the time you first learned about it?

Success and Satisfaction

What do you see as the primary goals of the Boston Promise Initiative?

- What do you see as the strengths of BPI?
- What do you see as the limitations of BPI?
- *(Stress process vs. outcome)*

Have you experienced any conflicts or challenges while participating in BPI?

- If so, how were these handled?

What do you think good collaboration looks like?

- What are the conveners doing?
- What are the participants doing?

Commitment and Identification

At this point I want to again stress that your answers are confidential and I will be very careful in presenting responses in a way that cannot be tied back to specific individuals.

How well do you feel like you know and understand BPI?

Can you describe your commitment level to the Boston Promise Initiative?
- What factors contribute to this level of commitment, for better or worse?
- Do you feel an emotional connection to BPI at all?

Do you think that participation in BPI has benefited you personally? If so, how?

Are there aspects of BPI that you really identify with?

Looking toward the future, how do you see your participation continuing or changing?
- What do you think impacts this?
- What do you think would change for you if you chose to not participate in BPI?

What do you see as the most important aspect of BPI?
- *(Get at process vs. outcome)*

Network Maps

In the final section of the interview, I'd like to show you the network maps I made based on the survey data. There are three maps, and I will have basically the same questions for each map. Here is an example of a network map. *(Describe the example, specifically organizations, ties, size, and color.)*

(Show map of communication, then collaboration.)

Describe what you see in this image.
- Probes:
    - Shape/density
    - Number of connections
    - Locations of specific organizations
    - Locations of organizations by sector

Does anything surprise you about this network image?

Describe your organizations location within the network. Does anything surprise you about this location?

Is there anything about the network that you think could hinder progress towards the BPI goals?

Are there any ways you think the network could be more effective?

Conclusion

As I mentioned in the beginning, the purpose of this study is to better understand collaborating for educational and community change. Is there anything else you think is important that I may have missed in this interview?

Thank you so much for participating in this interview.

Appendix E

Qualitative Codebook

Code	Definition	Example
Shared vision	References to shared vision, common agenda, or goals of the initiative.	"And you have to be strategic because each partner has their own agenda and their own vision. So, you have to be able to mitigate those things so that you're re-visioning as a team to unite the focus."
Organizational and community capacity	References to organizational capacity of the backbone support organization as well as other stakeholders involved in the initiative, including the community as a whole.	"[DSNI] had to build in a line of capacity to be in a relationship with the federal government. So, compliance, evaluation, and all of that. And I think that was not necessarily well anticipated."
Social capital	References to the nature of relationships between stakeholders; for instance, communication and collaboration around activities and services, relational trust, and power. Includes both network structure and network processes.	"You really learned a lot from those conferences. So yeah, things like that I think were really informative and good chances to just build relationships with others that are doing work that may overlap or that compliments the work that our organization does."
Feelings or beliefs	References to an individual's feelings or beliefs about the initiative; for instance, their	"Once I found out what Promise meant, that's just what I've been doing for 30 years. Working with families, looking at opportunities to promote their assets, looking at opportunities for them being families to provide some

	commitment or identification to the work.	information about programming, things of that nature. That was very important to me."
Impact on educational and community change	References to intended, perceived, and actual impact on educational and community change. Also includes structures and processes intended to measure impact, such as shared data systems.	"So, my question is, when you think about the Promise Neighborhoods at large, which has more impact? This, or somebody who actually made a deeper change in schools? I don't think they've made a deep change in those schools. But this network of support that they've woven is pretty amazing."
Sustainability planning*	References to planning for sustainability after Promise Neighborhoods funding ends.	"I think part of the challenge is what they are going to do when there isn't any money. Because they've built systems that are going to be hard to maintain without it."
Organizational identity*	References to DSNI's organizational identity, including DSNI's history, mission, vision, credibility, and other comments about how this may or may not have shifted with the design and implementation of the Boston Promise Initiative.	"One of the things that he was wrestling with was that BPI was becoming the identity of the organization, when in fact there are a whole lot of other resident-led things that DSNI was doing."
Supports	References to supports, strengths, or assets for efforts at educational and community change. [Double code if reference is also related to a content-based code.]	"Dudley made a lot of sense. I actually thought that DSNI was well-positioned given the legacy of its work. It really did have a neighborhood, and a very participatory framework at the neighborhood level for what it wanted to do."
Constraints	References to constraints, barriers, or challenges related to efforts at educational and community change. [Double code if reference	"Let's face it, without the funding, will they still have the ability to bring us all together and facilitate this work and have a person who organizes it, because that's a job in it of itself."

	is also related to a content-based code.]	
Schools*	All references to schools should be double coded with this code.	"So, the question is, what can a community-based organization do to make school more powerful? And I would hazard to say, that from a teaching and learning standpoint, there may be a limited set of things that organizations like DSNI can do, but you do start to reach this fringe at the boundary of the school that has to do with family stability, nonacademic supports, and a number of other things."

Note. Examples are actual data from this study.

* Codes marked with an asterisk were added from the inductive code generation process.

Appendix F

Communication Network Centrality Scores

Organization	Degree centrality	Eigenvector centrality	Betweenness centrality
Social and human services			
SS01	13	0.15	10.00
SS02	9	0.10	5.59
SS03	6	0.09	0.00
SS04	15	0.18	10.75
SS05	34	0.34	126.57
SS06	6	0.08	1.32
SS07	15	0.19	8.58
SS08	18	0.23	9.95
SS09	11	0.13	10.06
SS10	24	0.27	33.34
SS11	10	0.13	3.88
SS12	13	0.17	4.32
Educational services			
ED01	16	0.22	5.47
ED02	15	0.19	11.40
ED03	25	0.26	63.99
ED04	19	0.23	19.22
ED05	14	0.17	7.59
ED06	9	0.12	3.32
ED07	12	0.16	2.58
ED08	12	0.16	3.58
ED09	6	0.09	1.53
ED10	10	0.10	7.71
ED11	13	0.17	5.57
ED12	5	0.06	0.14
ED13	12	0.17	2.21
ED14	17	0.21	10.67
ED15	3	0.03	0.00
Schools			
S01	7	0.09	0.60
S02	10	0.13	3.00
S03	12	0.15	4.49
S04	5	0.07	0.83
S05	4	0.05	0.75
S06	14	0.17	9.08
Health and wellness			
HW01	20	0.23	23.73
HW02	10	0.13	3.20
HW03	5	0.08	0.00

Appendix G

Collaboration Network Centrality Scores

Organization	Degree centrality	Eigenvector centrality	Betweenness centrality
Social and human services			
SS01	9	0.16	27.00
SS02	6	0.10	6.77
SS03	2	0.05	0.00
SS04	9	0.20	10.56
SS05	25	0.40	243.45
SS06	2	0.05	0.00
SS07	12	0.23	47.99
SS08	9	0.21	7.24
SS09	4	0.06	39.92
SS10	13	0.28	21.51
SS11	5	0.11	2.44
SS12	7	0.14	7.90
Educational services			
ED01	12	0.26	23.21
ED02	3	0.08	0.33
ED03	10	0.18	35.11
ED04	15	0.30	48.51
ED05	9	0.21	6.70
ED06	2	0.07	0.00
ED07	5	0.11	0.58
ED08	11	0.24	11.86
ED09	3	0.08	0.33
ED10	4	0.06	11.10
ED11	5	0.11	2.93
ED12	1	0.01	0.00
ED13	3	0.08	0.00
ED14	14	0.27	55.99
ED15	3	0.03	1.00
Schools			
S01	5	0.12	1.81
S02	7	0.18	2.86
S03	7	0.13	8.18
S04	2	0.02	0.64
S05	5	0.08	4.11
S06	6	0.13	26.26
Health and wellness			
HW01	8	0.16	10.57
HW02	6	0.16	1.78
HW03	2	0.04	0.37